

DÆDALUS

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

The End of Consensus?

J. Myron Atkin
Allen H. Barton
Barry Bosworth
Robert Coles
Morris P. Fiorina
Patricia Albjerg Graham
Hans H. Landsberg
Linda B. Miller
Hans O. Staub
David Vogel
Robert Wood

UPSALA COLLEGE
LIBRARY

JUL 28 1980

EAST ORANGE, N. J. 07019



Summer 1980

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

\$4.00



Summer 1980: The End of Consensus? Issued as Vol. 109, No. 3 of the Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Stephen R. Graubard, Editor of the Academy and of Dædalus; William H. Brubeck, Managing Editor; Marie Goldstein, Manuscript Editor; Nicholas Ziegler, Research Editor; Theresa Jaskul, Executive Assistant; Ruth Taylor, Subscription Fulfillment Manager

Board of Editors

David Apter, Daniel Bell, Isaiah Berlin, François Bourricaud, Herman Feshbach, Paul Freund, Clifford Geertz, Lillian Hellman, Gerald Holton, Charles P. Kindleberger, Hans Landsberg, Martin Meyerson, Steven Muller, Carl E. Schorske, Judith N. Shklar, Jean Starobinski, Lewis Thomas, Robert Wilson

Editorial Office: Dædalus, 7 Linden Street, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138.

Subscription Office: Dædalus (ISSN 0011-5266) is published quarterly by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Subscription rate: \$14.00 one year; \$24.00 two years; \$34.00 three years.

All subscriptions and single copy orders and change of address information should be addressed to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 165 Allandale Street, Jamaica Plain Station, Boston, Massachusetts 02130.

Printed in the United States of America. Printing Office: 2901 Byrdbill Road, Richmond, Virginia. Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 12-30299. Second-class postage paid at Boston, Massachusetts, and at additional mailing offices. Copyright © 1980 by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

The End of Consensus?



DÆDALUS

Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences

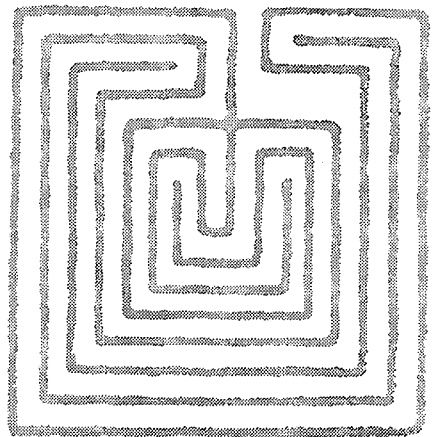
The End of Consensus?

	v	<i>Preface</i>
ALLEN H. BARTON	1	<i>Fault Lines in American Elite Consensus</i>
MORRIS P. FIORINA	25	<i>The Decline of Collective Responsibility in American Politics</i>
DAVID VOGEL	47	<i>The Inadequacy of Contemporary Opposition to Business</i>
BARRY BOSWORTH	59	<i>Re-establishing an Economic Consensus: An Impossible Agenda?</i>
HANS H. LANDSBERG	71	<i>Let's All Play Energy Policy!</i>
J. MYRON ATKIN	85	<i>The Government in the Classroom</i>
ROBERT WOOD	99	<i>The Disassembling of American Education</i>
PATRICIA ALBJERG GRAHAM	115	<i>Whither Equality of Educational Opportunity?</i>
ROBERT COLES	133	<i>Civility and Psychology</i>
LINDA B. MILLER	143	<i>Morality in Foreign Policy: A Failed Consensus?</i>
HANS O. STAUB	159	<i>The Tyranny of Minorities</i>



SUMMER 1980: THE END OF CONSENSUS?

Issued as Vol. 109, No. 3 of the Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences



Preface to the Issue: "The End of Consensus?"

THIS ISSUE OF *Daedalus* has its beginnings in a letter the Editor wrote to a New York foundation executive in April 1979. Many months before American hostages were taken in Iran and Soviet troops crossed into Afghanistan, attention was drawn to the unease that so many in the United States felt, that permeated so many of its more prestigious institutions, and that made terms like despair, guilt, decline, and failure come easily to men and women who had not been much habituated to using such language. Parts of the letter follow:

I am concerned with what many in this country (and abroad) are now talking about increasingly, the obvious and palpable decline in America's national morale. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that an earlier sense of national vision and purpose are significantly diminished; some would say, for all practical purposes, extinguished. Those who are most sanguine about the situation recall earlier occasions (there have been many during the last three decades) when comparable Cassandra-like warnings have issued from supposedly responsible quarters. Is it possible that our present discontents—while very real—lack the cosmic significance sometimes attributed to them? Do we have any reason for believing that the problems of the late 70s are significantly more serious than those, for example, of the 60s? Why, then, not wait for the turn of the wheel, for a new administration with new leadership, to bring new talent and new ideas into Washington, for a sense of crisis finally to mobilize the society so that it pursues policies and programs more in consonance with our resources and national character?

Even to write in this way is to risk being thought naive or ironical. Politicians may find it convenient to continue to argue in this vein; the quadrennial national political sport may even provide some legitimacy for such belief. The public, however, is not likely to be taken in by either. The ambivalences in the society are much too profound for any such quick political fixes to be seen as anything but quack cures. We are not living in 1952, filled with a sense of our incomparable success and power; this is not 1960, with "a new generation" yearning to take over; nor is it 1968, with a terrible foreign war being thought responsible for all deviation from reason and justice; we do not even have the solace of 1976, the promise of personal purity and virtue. We can go on looking for a new Roosevelt—Teddy or Franklin—for a new Kennedy—Jack or Bobby—but a residual sense of proportion tells us that our troubles are not likely to be resolved by such discoveries.

The "crisis"—if it be that—is clearly more profound. It requires more than the discovery of a leader; it is related to something other than the limited capacities of a hardworking president, or the insufficiencies of certain of his appointees. There is clearly a deeper trouble in the society; interestingly enough, there are no longer any quick explanations for how this trouble can be remedied.

This, in my view, accounts for much of the ambivalence of our time. We no longer understand how events relate to each other; we are desperately short of explanatory systems in which any degree of confidence can be vested. We seem suddenly deprived of the capacity to imagine or construct vital new institutions; it is not always apparent that we know how to renovate those that already exist. We

feel overwhelmed by problems, and take no comfort from the fact that many are novel and unprecedented.

All these conditions make me ask whether this may not be a propitious time to look at our moral disarray, to determine why we are so uncertain, why the divisions are so deep, and why there appear to be so few politically viable remedies. We are familiar with the common complaints, but hopelessly confused about how the complaints relate to each other and how they might be alleviated. . . .

If we are to achieve anything with a large agenda, we must move away from monocausal explanations. Our situation is caused not by the collapse of liberalism, the growth of bureaucracy, the decline of venture capitalism. Such explanations only serve to conceal our ignorance; however useful they may be for electoral purposes, they do not go very far toward resolving our problems.

It is easy to say that what is required is greater candor, greater honesty about the kind of society developing in the United States. Because candor is a virtue, while hypocrisy is the unpardonable vice, there is a powerful incentive to think in such terms. Our need, however, is for a more subtle analysis, based on something other than black-and-white appraisals. We need to know more about the personal and collective memories of those now alive, and of why so many feel disgruntled and cheated. The fact that groups are not demonstrating in the streets proves very little. There is much to suggest that Americans are preoccupied with a whole range of injustices in their society and that these injustices are rarely the ones treated by the media. We have yet to learn what the effects of permanent inflation are proving to be on various groups.

We need to understand why so many institutions appear sluggish, so lacking in any sense of leadership or purpose. A vast number of once important institutions—including churches, professions, corporations, trade unions, universities—appear virtually headless. This is not a result only of democratization—of the democratic habit of cutting down trees that tower above the rest—but is related to the suspicion with which all authority is viewed. If, however, authority is suspect, what governance is possible? We still think of the need to restore “moral vision and purpose.” Do such terms have meaning today? If so, how does one go about achieving such an objective?

We need to rethink the meaning of “reform,” to consider again what Alfred North Whitehead meant when he said that the introduction of a reform does not simply prove the zeal of the reforming generation. Our whole style of problem-solving—in the social area—may be hopelessly outmoded. We may be employing devices that reflect an experience no longer relevant to the kind of society we have become. Given the power of public officials—of federal and state bureaucracies—wholly new conditions obtain. Our political institutions are perhaps more confining than we would like to acknowledge, and the difficulties of changing them may be greater than we would like to believe.

Where there are 200 minorities—each believing that its cause (abortion, sexual freedom, arms control, ethnic identity, environmental pollution, women’s rights) is the only important one—securing consensus becomes a Herculean task. The problem of “representation” is more serious than it has been at any time since the eighteenth century, and the whole meaning of “democracy” takes on new dimensions. May there not be an advantage in our getting away from our traditional specializing and particularizing habits, just once, to consider in a broader context why the republic seems so feeble, why there is so little confidence in what so many in high places do, why so many sense a moral and intellectual confusion?

Can the essays that appear in this issue of *Daedalus* be said to respond adequately to so daunting an array of contemporary challenges? It would be pre-

sumptuous to suggest that they do, or that they go very far toward resolving many of the questions posed. Still, they do offer more than a first tentative approach to their solution, if only because they throw into perspective many of the conventional explanations generally given to account for our current discontents. It may be useful to be reminded that the country for a time seemed united in its acceptance of Keynesian economic planning and found the novel military policy of deterrence wholly credible. It may be even more important to consider whether we do not perhaps exaggerate the extent of the earlier national consensus on even such fundamental issues, not to speak of many others. The myth of an earlier "agreement" grows precisely as the reality of disagreement and disaggregation today becomes more conspicuous. If there is a tendency at the moment to romanticize the past—to think back longingly to a time when the United States seemed to dominate the world economically, militarily, scientifically, intellectually, and when all major problems seemed well on their way to solution—even the most cursory examination of the 1940s and 1950s suggests that the divisions within American society were never quite as insignificant as is now suggested, and that much of what now appears so blatantly on the surface was already visible even then. It is at least possible that the so-called American consensus was never nearly as complete as memory would wish now to represent it.

The period from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s—the so-called Vietnam era—also calls out for new analysis. One of the disappointments of this volume is that so little of that analysis has been attempted. We are still living with many of the political shibboleths of that day, so important for making possible the instant careers of many who had previously been inconspicuous. In a society of hawks and doves, there must also be goats and angels; generic attribution will depend always on personal judgment, about where virtue is said to reside and where vice is thought to have its lair. Because moralism did not creep into American politics with the twentieth century or even with World War II, its roots being deep and tangled, the importance of moral aggression and pretense in our society needs always to be recalled. The tendency of the country to divide—to create an opposition even when there is no explicit constitutional need for such an entity—needs also to be considered.

If, as Allen Barton suggests, the country today has its elite cleavages, with Democratic moderates vying for success with Republican conservatives, it is by no means certain that the policies of either will win in the long run. Barton is willing to entertain the possibility of a wholly new consensus, which might come close to accepting something like the "negotiated economies" of Western Europe. Knowing, however, the many reasons why American trade unions, business organizations, and farm groups would resist such coordinated policies, he raises also the possibility of a wholly new kind of labor-liberal-minorities party developing in the 1980s. Barton considers also, if only in passing, what the implications of such changes would be for American foreign policy, and why the earlier slogans, so congenial to American ideological preferences, may no longer suffice. The essay needs to be read as a remarkable tribute to traditional American optimism. Everything is possible; nothing is foreclosed. All problems may yet come to be resolved.

It is more than the coincidence of this issue of *Daedalus* being published in a presidential election year that explains the preoccupation of several of our authors with American politics and, specifically, with the decline of party and the reduced fortunes of liberal ideology in the country. Morris Fiorina, reflecting on what the withering away of political parties signifies, and why it needs to be viewed as something more than a temporary aberration, dwells on the declining American capacity to fix responsibility on specific individuals for what happens in the public arena. Fiorina writes: "By holding only the president responsible for national conditions, the electorate enables officialdom as a whole to escape responsibility." This is more than a charge of harlotry (power without responsibility) against elected officials or others appointed to high office; it is more than a charge of ineptness, malfeasance, or arrogance on the part of bureaucrats. Fiorina wishes to explain the immobilism that characterizes so much of American policy today, that makes short-range advantage seem so much more important than long-term considerations. Single-issue politics is not new to the United States; what is new, Fiorina argues, is the fear that politicians feel when confronted with "threats" that such groups are capable of making. In the absence of strong political parties, able to provide some minimal defense, the individual officeholder feels exposed and vulnerable. If, in addition to this, an exaggerated national disillusion with politicians and politics is encouraged, the public distrust of government becomes positively dangerous. In such a climate, Fiorina writes, "officials do not govern, they merely posture."

David Vogel, considering what he thinks to be the growing political influence of business in American society, suggests that this "success" cannot be explained by the growing popularity of conservative social and economic policies; rather, he says, it is attributable to "the growing public awareness of the inadequacies of the political vision of the left-liberal tradition of American reform." There is, Vogel argues, a backlash against regulation itself; joined to this is a growing dubiety about the adequacy of conventional solutions for problems that relate to the American economy. So long as economic growth and social improvement—once thought to be wholly compatible and complementary objectives—were thought realizable by measures comprehensible to those who pretended to understand the workings of the capitalist economy, and so long as significant economic and political successes were indeed registered, the left-of-center political community appeared to be in the ascendancy. With productivity decline, high rates of inflation, expensive energy, and mass unemployment, however, the old economic formulae are suddenly rendered hollow and stale. There is now a curious defensiveness in the once aggressive American liberal community; with it comes a marked unwillingness to explore new and possibly hazardous industrial possibilities. Vogel describes a condition of near-nostalgia; a wish to experience again the happy days of American economic hegemony, to replicate the world as it existed before 1973. Yet, nothing like this is possible.

If liberals are insufficiently attentive to the political and social consequences of arrested economic growth, conservatives are guilty of a no less serious intellectual error; too many of them assume that a healthy private economic sector will necessarily carry with it the promise of greater material and social welfare. Neither of these positions can be sustained. Nor, according to Vogel, is it a foregone conclusion that greater business aggressiveness—a more deliberate use

of political power to gain concrete concessions from government—will automatically increase the competitiveness of American industry or make it a more powerful economic force in world markets. Vogel, considering how both Left and Right define the issues that confront the country today, and reflecting on the policies that are likely to follow from such formulations, prophesies “a decade of continued political paralysis.”

Barry Bosworth is only a trifle less pessimistic; believing that the country's growing preoccupation with its serious economic plight is itself some cause for optimism, he approaches today's policy issues with a perspective significantly different from that of his fellow authors. Acknowledging the importance of an earlier agreement on Keynesian solutions for economic problems, particularly within the federal government after John F. Kennedy's arrival in office, Bosworth reminds us that American economists were always more divided on that subject than our present distorted recollections suggest. In any case, the Keynesian program began to unravel as early as the mid-1960s; the cause, quite simply, was the Vietnam war and the huge military expenditures that it engendered. It was the 1969 recession, however, that gave the *coup de grâce* to the Keynesian demand management policies of the 1960s. The failure to control inflation, together with unexpected high unemployment rates, made the Keynesian formulations seem both politically and economically unsatisfactory. If today three issues dominate—inflation, slow productivity growth, and a too great dependency on foreign oil—and if these issues need to be dealt with in an integrated manner, there is still little disposition to do this; the consequence, Bosworth writes, is conflict and stalemate, and neither is likely to disappear very soon. Economists are themselves divided about the measures that need to be taken; given major changes that have occurred within the executive branch of government, agreement there is not easily reached. Public doubts about governmental competence have never been greater, and this cannot but exacerbate all problems. These are perhaps best demonstrated in the continued deterioration of relations between Congress and the president; the former, constitutionally and traditionally incapable of leading or taking the initiative, confronts a White House that is manifestly incapable of acting. Bosworth, like Fiorina, attaches great importance to the decline of political parties in America. If others looking at the United States today are reminded of the stalemated society of France's Third Republic, Bosworth is led to offer another analogy, the United Kingdom in the 1950s and 1960s. Acknowledging that the causes for the economic malaise are different in the two instances, he insists that the necessity for action is no less great. In the absence of agreement, however, about what needs to be done, and with institutions that are rigid and unyielding, the opportunities for leadership are very restricted. Bosworth, despite all the negative evidence in hand, refuses to despair.

This, in some sense, is also the position of Hans Landsberg. Narrating the story of America's efforts to resolve its energy dilemmas, he offers distressing details and data; they tell a great deal about America's political institutions, but also about the country's values and political preferences. If the growth in total energy consumption has slowed down, and if energy is being used somewhat more efficiently today, reliance on foreign oil imports remains dangerously large. “We are more vulnerable now than we were in 1973,” Landsberg writes.

He goes on to say: "Today import interruptions would represent a more severe problem than they did then; the remedies would hurt more." Why, then, has not more been accomplished? No one can argue that the president has not tried. Indeed, there is scarcely any issue, foreign or domestic, to which he has given more attention. If the failures cannot be attributed to a lack of effort, what has been missing—conspicuously so—is any sort of agreement. The energy issue touched too many interests. Every proposal became the subject of violent dispute with ideological and political overtones. When one considers what happens when "antibigness, antitechnology, antigrowth, environmental primacy, consumerism, defense dovishness, and antifederalism" forces coalesce, one has some idea of the nature of the contest. It serves no purpose to mock or denigrate such concerns, or any of the others that imagined themselves in jeopardy. Horse trading—conventional political and economic compromise—did not operate in this highly charged sphere. The interests were too diverse; issues of equity and fairness were too complex. The risks and hazards were too obvious, too susceptible to ideological exaggeration and hyperbole. Still, in recent months, some "horse trading"—logrolling may seem a less offensive word—has proved possible. Why? Because necessity has dictated that concessions be made. Others will now have to be considered. Is it certain, then, that the massive disagreements over energy are finally at an end? Not at all. Landsberg believes that "a hardening of attitudes" is still very possible; his hope, obviously, is for another kind of solution.

To move from a discussion of energy to education is to move from concerns that today dominate the political agenda and figure prominently in the mass media to matters that seem almost quiescent by comparison. Yet, an argument can be made—and it is implicit in the Editor's decision to seek not one but three contributions on this issue—that no questions more perfectly express the moral ambiguity of our time, or the political and social fissures that continue to separate individuals and groups, than those that touch education. If energy issues touch raw nerves, creating hostility and ideological conflict of a kind not previously known, this is nothing when compared with what has happened in recent years in education. There, the interest groups are so numerous, so powerful, and so fundamentally at variance with one another that a consensus, old or new, is almost impossible to conceive. In education, code words are common; they conceal (very inadequately) feelings and fears that are not easily compromised.

J. Myron Atkin traces a whole series of developments that began twenty-five years ago that caused the federal government to undertake wholly new responsibilities in respect to both primary and secondary education. He is surprised, in retrospect, that so little opposition developed to these new initiatives by Washington, that, indeed, these intrusions were greeted with enthusiasm. Because many of these policies were linked to national defense, and because security was then thought to be a prime good, there was no disposition to quibble over these new federal assertions of authority. Gradually, in the 1960s, attention shifted from such concerns to others that were more deliberately domestic. If Lyndon Johnson persevered in Eisenhower's policies, hoping to improve the scientific and mathematical skills of the young, thereby contributing to resolve the country's needs for highly trained specialists, he had another purpose also: to raise

the educational achievement of those groups whose life chances traditionally had been unpromising. Vast new efforts were set in train by the man who wanted to be remembered as the Education President.

By the early 1970s, however, Atkin writes, the national consensus about education was shattered. There was growing fragmentation within the educational community itself; politically, the efforts by new interest groups to achieve purposes of a kind that had not figured previously met increased opposition. The schools, pressed to become agencies of social reform, were asked to achieve what other institutions in the society were either not doing or had no interest to do. Politically powerful minorities showed no hesitation in using the schools for purposes they deemed morally correct and educationally necessary. Such policies served principally to expand the role of the federal government in education; state governments quickly followed, mandating curricular and other policies that would have seemed quite beyond the range of their competence only a few years earlier. Not surprisingly, all this produced consequences that were not anticipated. If there was a certain increase in achievement, there also appeared to be some leveling down. Many who were gratified by the first seemed to show no great concern about the second; others, however, publicly deplored conditions that seemed so inattentive to the special needs of *their* children. As Atkin explains, public education became immensely controversial.

If some parents, whether out of prejudice or principle, opposed busing and court-mandated integration, others, black and white, very often from the middle class, worried about the quality of the education their children were receiving in public institutions; many elected to send their children, often at considerable financial sacrifice, to private schools. These circumstances only contributed to the sense of "crisis" that many felt and that communicated itself all too quickly to teachers and school administrators. Whether for good or ill, the influence of those who had traditionally guarded the curriculum and much else in the schools gave way before the forces that were operating outside. There is every reason to believe that these conditions will continue, exacerbated almost certainly by economic circumstances that may be much less favorable in the 1980s than they were in the 1960s. Atkin's prophecy, though guarded, suggests that if hard times continue, "the quality of public education will continue to slide perceptibly while the government strains to have an ever-greater role in stemming the decline."

Robert Wood, in writing about the "disassembling of American education," tells a tale that is scarcely more encouraging. American schools, like many other American institutions, appear in a state of disarray; the loss in the "sense of mission and purpose" is palpable; so, also, is the diminished confidence that many inside and outside feel and express. The notion that the country is able to provide both equal and quality education—and that there is no fundamental contradiction between the two—is no longer generally subscribed to. Educational institutions, required to cope with wholly new kinds of problems and conditions, the result of significant social change and new political demands, feel themselves overwhelmed by what they are required to do. Different parts of the system are subject to different kinds of pressures. When, however, one considers how education has had to accommodate itself to the decisions of courts; the administrative orders of federal (and state) agencies; the professional

and social results of rapid unionization (particularly of teachers at the primary and secondary school levels); the insistent and persistent demands of parents, quite different in ideological fervor and social orientation from any that once figured as legitimate PTA exercises; the vastly expanded activities of a host of new and old external interest groups, who are all too aware of their influence and power—it is not surprising that administrators and teachers feel overwhelmed by the demands placed on them. When so many have also come to doubt their capacity to cope with such explosive agendas, and when their institutions appear so vulnerable and at the same time so little esteemed, it is scarcely surprising that many are nostalgic about the past, wondering where their once-vaunted autonomy and authority have gone. Wood, while having no reason to be sanguine, insists that the need today is to think about how institutional resurgence can be planned and achieved. The educational institutions cannot protect themselves one by one; a very different order of organization and collective effort is called for.

Patricia Graham, considering what “equality of educational opportunity” has meant over the last twenty-five years, reminds us of the extraordinary optimism that prevailed when the programs instituted to achieve these ends were first designed. The federal government, it was imagined, could guarantee greater access; money, facilities, and special programs were thought to be goods—tangible goods—that were more than sufficient to accomplish what was indisputably a great moral purpose. Desegregation seemed to carry great promise, particularly if it served to generate strong community leadership. The infusion of massive federal funds was a new experience for all educators; they welcomed the support and reveled in their own new prominence and importance. When, however, the government, in its concern to show itself accountable and responsible, began to evaluate the major federal programs, the results did not delight those who imagined that the infusion of federal monies would quickly bring to an end any number of inequities and inequalities. Beginning in 1966 with the Coleman report, and continuing in the years that followed, researchers told a common tale—educational achievement seemed to be less a function of school effectiveness than of family orientation and background. The public accepted with glee reports that claimed to be objective, that documented a tale of institutional failure. The schools were not achieving what some of their more ardent friends insisted they were capable of doing. While some of the public criticism undoubtedly reflected an all-too-obvious distaste for certain changes that had taken place, that had brought blacks and others into classrooms from which they had previously been excluded, it would be wrong, Graham writes, to imagine that all the criticism reflected such bias about race or class. Something else was at work; the country, quite simply, no longer believed in government or in the professions in the way it once had. Graham writes: “For many Americans the public schools in the seventies came to symbolize the lack of moral leadership associated with the government, the unsubstantiated arrogance attributed to the professions, and the general ineffectiveness in delivery of services connected with both.”

The need today, quite obviously, is for a restoration of public confidence in America’s public schools. How can this be achieved? Graham argues that it requires that attention be given principally to what she chooses to define as

equity—the educating of all Americans to the maximum of their potentialities. Such a policy necessarily implies difference; more than that, it implies that the schools accept as their principal function a role not intended to exclude other purposes, but that makes “literacy for all” primary. Graham believes such an objective to be realistic and realizable, which is not to say that it will be easily accomplished. She advances the idea because she believes that it cannot but benefit the individual; it will also help society. Graham, concerned with the restoration of public confidence in American public education—a confidence that has been severely shaken in recent years—offers what she believes can only prove palatable and attractive.

If these essays on education have a common theme, and if their number can be justified, it is that the authors, without shame, subscribe to a common belief—almost a cliché—that there is no resource, natural or social, more important than that represented by the youth of the country. What the young know, what they learn, how they act, what they believe, is immensely important for the future. In this, as in so much else, the material presented in this issue of *Daedalus* may be thought disconcerting. Robert Coles, in writing about civility and psychology, suggests that the great divide in America today may not be the classic North-South division but the one that separates East from West. However important these and other such regional differences may be, Coles’s chief concern is with the common culture, with what helps to define and characterize the American today. Discovering a growing uniformity—indeed, a paralyzing conformity—Coles asks whether it does not derive from the “obsession” that is common to our national life, an obsession with psychology. Is the excessive concern with “self,” so characteristic a feature of our time, not ultimately dangerous? Is it possible, Coles asks, that this preoccupation with self is in certain important ways linked to American consumerism and even to the growing tendency for many to choose to involve themselves only in single-issue political activity? What happens to civility, let alone to politics, when such sentiments become common? Are there to be no “shared imperatives” that transcend our individual appetites? It is the “sad paradox of a collective egoism” that Coles deplores; he is alarmed by its prospects. How our educational system contributes to this condition, how indeed this new conformity (consensus, if you will) has managed to make its way, and what its consequences may be for a republic like ours are all issues opened up by Coles’s provocative essay.

In writing about American foreign policy, Linda Miller dwells on the moral issues that figure so prominently in other of the essays. Refusing to accept the simple proposition that sees American foreign policy controlled by realism at certain times, by idealism at others, she seeks to establish a more meaningful set of distinctions. That there is an incontestable and continuing attractiveness in the notion that morality in foreign policy is essential, that its potency has never been fairly tested, is an idea that constantly recurs. Miller knows that there is an almost insatiable appetite in the country for policies that can be shown to be moral. Power politics, in the United States at least, is made to appear obscene; high-minded purpose is always preferred. Even before World War I, America covered its every use of force with camouflage that reeked of idealism. Miller writes: “Public confidence in the government required morality in foreign policy as ballast.” The conditions that obtained in the interwar years, later, during

the cold war, and, more recently, when *Realpolitik* was thought to be in the saddle, always left a good deal of room for protestations of idealism and morality. When, after Vietnam and Watergate, Carter reached the White House, he promised measures and policies that would show a clear preference for diplomatic persuasion over military engagement, that would protect global interests over narrow national self-interests. That the achievements of the present Administration in foreign policy have been considerably less striking than the promises is now generally acknowledged. Reviewing the Carter Administration's policies on human rights, nuclear nonproliferation, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and superpower relations, Miller shows how political contradictions surfaced almost immediately, and how the moral ambiguities of particular situations revealed themselves. The main initiatives, based always on military and economic capacities clearly unequal to the tasks they were required to fulfill, led almost always to embarrassing defeats or withdrawals. Allies and adversaries, scarcely impressed by such policies, however well motivated, thought them reckless and ill-conceived excursions. The Administration's domestic gains with particular interest groups scarcely compensated for the more obvious foreign losses. With morality at a discount today—not least because of these failures—there is new nostalgia, Miller says, for something like the earlier containment policy. Such a program, she thinks, would work no better than those that have been recently tried; it would be founded on an unwillingness to confront conditions as they now exist. To reestablish a consensus along the old ideological and political lines would be difficult, probably impossible; to find new bases for agreement may be no less difficult. The country may have to carry on without a consensus, relying instead on a wary calibration of risks and opportunities, acknowledging that a healthy pragmatism has its own attractiveness.

If Americans are much preoccupied with the fissures in their society, and if single-issue politics seems almost to have taken over in certain critical spheres, the conditions that obtain in Western Europe are not wholly different. Hans Staub, in writing about the tyranny of minorities, seeks to develop a view that will put into perspective ethnic and nationality protest, while taking account also of those whose principal concern is with ecology, nuclear power, abortion, and the like. If, as Staub says, we are living in the "age of minorities," ours may also be an "age of intolerance." The old-style liberal values—free discussion, free assembly, and free press—seem curiously old-fashioned, almost irrelevant to the needs of our day. If there are no grand political ideologies to command the allegiance of many millions, there appears to be also a conspicuous lack of commanding political personalities. Many complain of feeling powerless; indeed, it is this complaint that drives them into political pursuits that can only be thought parochial. Staub, while alarmed by these developments, is not unwilling to entertain the possibility that some good may yet come from them. Something other than the tyranny of single-issue minorities may be in prospect.

This issue of *Daedalus* ought to be read as the first in a series that we intend to continue and expand. It is obvious that basic questions about the direction of American society (and, perhaps, of the West more generally) need to be asked. It is important to recognize how many of these questions relate to fundamental moral issues. More than that, it is important to recognize how inadequate most contemporary political and social institutions appear to be for dealing with such

matters. Yet, the invention of new institutions seems an incomparably difficult problem for us. The essays in this volume are intended to be read as simply an introduction to the subject.

Thanks are due to the Ford Foundation for helping to make this issue possible. Also, a great debt is owed Dr. David Robinson of the Carnegie Corporation for making a grant to us at a critical time. Finally, note should be taken of the fact that *Daedalus*, in collaboration with St. Paul's School of Concord, New Hampshire, is now engaged in a continuing seminar on secondary education. The essays on education in this volume would not have come to us had that seminar not stimulated our concern with questions that did not previously figure so prominently on our agenda.

S.R.G.

ALLEN H. BARTON

Fault Lines in American Elite Consensus

From Consensus to Multiple Crises

AMERICAN SOCIETY ENJOYED GREAT ECONOMIC SUCCESS from the end of World War II until the late 1960s. A set of economic arrangements was developed during the New Deal and World War II that enjoyed general consensus among the leaders of America's most powerful institutions. These included Keynesian antidepression policies, "responsible" bargaining by organized labor to share in increased productivity, "workable" competition among big corporations, and a moderate expansion of welfare-state programs to benefit the old and specific categories of the poor. These arrangements were accompanied by twenty-five years of stable growth of the economy. Only the poorest 10 or 20 percent, the "other America," were left out, and during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations ambitious plans were made to use some of the fiscal dividend to end poverty in America.

During the same period American military power was predominant outside the solid bloc of Communist nations that ran from East Germany to China. There was almost total consensus among American leaders and the public on the containment of communism, supported by stable nuclear deterrence. Democratic capitalism was restored in Western Europe and Japan, and was to be encouraged in the less developed countries outside the Soviet bloc by a combination of economic assistance and forcible suppression of all radical movements. Some liberals complained about U.S. support of oppressive dictatorships, but there was little opposition to repeated military and covert interventions in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, while the Soviet Union was allowed to intervene militarily to put down revolutions in Eastern Europe. This period of economic growth and world military domination was not without temporary setbacks and bitter arguments—including one over an almost wholly delusive "threat of Communists in the United States"¹—but in general the American society was working satisfactorily for most of its people.

Now American society faces a set of forces that is likely to reduce material living standards, thus violating deeply held expectations and setting off bitter conflicts over the distribution of incomes that had been submerged as long as there was a growth dividend to be shared. These forces include:

1. A much lower growth in productivity in the past ten years

2. Much higher petroleum costs, as oil-producing nations refuse to continue selling off their resources to the United States and Europe at low prices, and as more accessible domestic supplies are exhausted
3. A massive public demand to reduce environmental pollution and workplace hazards, which has to be paid for by increased dollar costs for the same amount of goods
4. In particular, intense opposition to using the main alternatives to petroleum as an energy source—coal and nuclear fission—which carry with them special environmental problems
5. New instabilities in the world balance of power, leading to demands for increased military spending

The inflation that began with President Johnson's attempt to conceal the costs of the Vietnam War was intensified by a cycle of negotiated wage increases and administered price increases in 1969-1971, and led President Nixon to use wage and price controls as a shock treatment. The OPEC petroleum price increases meant that U.S. real living standards had to fall—but nobody was prepared to accept a cut in his own wages or salary or profits, so everyone who had any bargaining power further jacked up wages and prices. The costs of environmental regulations began to be added onto prices, and again everyone with bargaining power tried to compensate themselves so that someone else would pay these costs. The effort to impose energy conservation has mainly taken the form of allowing energy prices to rise slowly toward their real levels—and again various groups are attempting to shift the costs onto others. The resulting double-digit inflation has outraged the public, exacerbated conflicts over distribution, and undermined confidence in institutional leadership of all kinds.

The effort to deal with inflation has added to the list of dilemmas confronting policymakers and the public:

1. To reduce inflation, should social programs designed to benefit the poor be reduced? Should public-service jobs for the unemployed be cut back at the same time as jobs in the private sector are reduced?
2. To reduce inflation, is it necessary to create even more unemployment than we have? How much unemployment does it now take to hold down wage and price increases?
3. To reduce inflation by encouraging increased productivity, must we abandon egalitarian elements that now exist in the tax system—the progressive income tax, capital gains taxes, and inheritance taxes?
4. To what extent is inflation institutionalized in the big corporation and the big labor union, so that both will have to be subjected to compulsory controls or broken up?

To make things more difficult, the world system has become increasingly unstable since the failure of the American war against the Vietnamese Communists, the development of nuclear weapons parity by the Soviet Union, and the rise of various militant revolutionary movements in countries the United States was once able to control through assistance, pressure, or intervention. The United States and the Soviet Union have failed to achieve mutual restraint in either the conventional or the nuclear arms races owing to the enormous gap in values and strategic assumptions of the leaders of the two very different societies. The Soviet Union has not only expanded its sphere of military intervention to include Afghanistan, but has declared its right to intervene militarily anywhere in the world in support of "revolutionary" governments, matching the U.S. doctrine of its right to help suppress revolution anywhere in the world—just at the time when it seemed that domestic forces were compelling the United States to abandon at least the more violent forms of intervention. The resulting pressures for military spending to maintain the balance of power and the balance of terror exacerbate the problems of inflation and cutbacks in domestic social programs and revive the foreign policy divisions of the Vietnam period.

The inflation-productivity-energy-environment-equity problem is a cat's cradle of interlocking ties; the whole thing has come onto the political agenda of the nation at once, and it seems to defy traditional piecemeal remedies. Groups that were able to cooperate reasonably well during the period of growth in the 1950s and 1960s now come into deep conflict in this new situation of scarcity, and it is not at all clear that existing ideologies and institutions can deal with the resulting crisis.

The economic crisis in the United States today clearly involves much less acute physical suffering than the Great Depression, and the world crisis is less obviously headed toward a world war than was the unrestrained aggressiveness of the Fascist powers in the 1930s. Now, however, there may be less room for muddling through. Will the United States be able to respond effectively? This is a problem that challenges both the elites—the leaders of our major institutions—and the public.

Problem-Solving in America's Past

The United States is a pluralist society in which law and political tradition allow institutions to exist independent of the state. In principle, any part of the population can form its own organizations and put forward its own leadership to engage in politics or legal collective action. In practice, of course, groups may lack the resources, education, or organizational capacity and remain unrepresented or weakly represented; and some kinds of groups have been actively suppressed in the past, notably abolitionists, Socialists, unions, Populists, and blacks. A pluralist system does not guarantee that groups will have power in proportion to their numbers—money, prestige, skills, and organizational position weight the scales of power. However, in the long run—a very long run indeed for some groups—the logic of civil liberties and the right to organize have allowed all groups some degree of representation in the system. The American system might be called "biased pluralism."

Given the existence of multiple elites, based on a variety of sources of influence and a variety of groups in the population, how has the American system dealt with problems in the past? Consider these examples:

1. When the new nation had been operating for a few years, many groups felt that the central government was too weak. All of the elite groups of the country—southern slave plantation owners, northern large landowners, urban merchants, politicians representing the small farmers, politicians representing urban small businessmen and artisans—got together at the Constitutional Convention and worked out a compromise that proved acceptable to the electorate.² This elite compromise worked to create a national market and a governmental system capable of expanding westward and opening up political participation to all white males.

2. The constitutional system broke down seventy years later over the economic and moral issue that it had left unresolved—slavery in the South and its possible expansion. The moral contradiction of slavery in a national culture based on individual freedom made the issue noncompromisable; the slave-owning elite tried to secede, and an extremely bloody civil war followed.

3. The slavery issue resolved by war, economic growth accelerated and a class of wealthy entrepreneurs in industry and banking became the most powerful elite, while a new class of industrial workers was created in their factories. The small farmers, plagued by debt, deflation, and lack of bargaining power, tried to organize cooperatives and a Populist political movement.³ The new class of wage-earners at the same time tried to organize a labor movement. The two movements never came together, and both suffered crushing defeats at the hands of a conservative coalition of big business, local small business, southern planters, and the politicians of both parties allied with these groups.

4. The conservative coalition suffered some temporary schisms in the 1900s over issues of monopoly and corruption of politics. Smaller businessmen and educated professionals led the “Progressive” revolt⁴ that split the Republicans and allowed certain reforms to be passed and a Democratic intellectual reformer to be elected president. Meanwhile, continued rapid economic growth maintained general public support for the system despite farmer and labor grievances.

5. Having become a major economic power, the United States was drawn into the great European war, first as a supplier and financier, then as a combatant. President Wilson tried to define a moral and ideological as well as an economic role for the United States in the creation of a peaceful world order, to be embodied in the League of Nations. The political and economic elites of the United States deadlocked on the issue of American participation in the League and pursued such contradictory policies on the issues of economic help to Europe versus collection of war debts that the world economy collapsed in 1929, militarist dictatorship took over three major powers, and a new world war was begun.⁵

6. The business elite of the 1920s was as close to an unchallenged ruling class as America has ever had. When it ran the country into a disastrous depres-

sion and was unable to extricate it or even help the victims, it lost political control. The New Deal coalition brought together urban political bosses, professional reformers, labor leaders, and southern and western agrarian politicians of the old Democratic party. This coalition imposed programs of relief and reform over the bitter opposition of most of the business elite and its allied newspaper publishers and Republican politicians.⁶

7. Confronting the aggressive expansion of the Fascist powers, the top New Deal leaders forced through Congress decisions to aid Britain and to build up the armed forces, over the bitter opposition of an isolationist movement which split all classes and institutions. The winning foreign policy coalition combined mainly eastern business leaders with a large part of the labor, intellectual, and southern supporters of the New Deal.

8. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor restored complete consensus on fighting the war, if not on whether to emphasize Europe or Asia and how to finance it. Wartime consensus extended to massive deficit financing which created full and over-full employment almost immediately, to the acceptance of unionization of most blue-collar workers, and to wage and price controls. Fair employment practices for black workers, on the other hand, were only won by the threat of a massive march on Washington in the middle of the war, organized by black union and civil rights leaders.

9. Immediately after the war dissension arose between leaders who hoped to continue wartime cooperation with the U.S.S.R., those who wanted aid to recovery given only to the capitalist nations, and the old isolationists. Fear of communist expansion won most of the isolationists over to support of aid to Western Europe and "containment" of communism. Repressive Soviet policies in Eastern Europe, the Communist coup d'état in democratic Czechoslovakia, and communist aggression in Korea virtually eliminated support for United States-Soviet cooperation. Criticism of U.S. policies became identified with pro-communism, and communism with Stalinism in its worst forms, so that the imprisonment of Communists and the silencing of critics of U.S. policy were accepted by almost all groups.

10. By the 1960s the "hyperconsensus" on containment of communism had led the United States into the quagmire of Vietnam—a place where even half a million American soldiers could not defeat a communist revolution, assisted by North Vietnam, against an unpopular, reactionary government. This experience broke up the foreign policy consensus and created a large "peace movement" with its own leaders, intellectuals, and political organizers. The Democratic party was first split and then briefly "taken over" at the presidential convention level by the peace movement; the business establishment meanwhile was also influenced by "conservative doves," so that the Republican administration finally abandoned Vietnam.

11. In the postwar period, as we noted earlier, the lessons of the 1930s and the wartime economy led to elite consensus on a Keynesian economic policy, in which government spending increases or tax cuts served to smooth out recessions. There was general acceptance by business leaders of the right of workers to organize, and collective bargaining went on as a normal practice, with occa-

sional strikes. The welfare-state policies of the New Deal were expanded under Republican and Democratic presidents alike. Productivity increased sufficiently to cover wage increases, social security increases, and salary increases for executives and professionals, with only a small rate of inflation.

In these examples we can see four kinds of outcomes of problem situations:

1. *Elite compromise and consensus*, leading to effective policies capable of securing mass support (the making of the Constitution; domestic policies in the agrarian republic from Jefferson to Jackson; domestic and foreign policies of the 1950s).

2. *Deadlocks between elites*, and splits within elites, leading to policy failures (the inability to contain expansion of slavery and find a peaceful way to eliminate the institution, resulting in the Civil War; the inability to work out America's political and economic relations to the world after World War I, resulting in World War II).

3. *Imposition of a solution* by one coalition on another after a political struggle (the business victory over populism and the labor movement in the 1890s; the New Deal coalition's victory over business in the 1930s; the interventionists' victory over the isolationists in 1940-1941).

4. "*Hyperconsensus*"—unquestioned dominance of an orthodox policy among almost all elites, often accompanied by repression of criticism, and leading to major policy failures (economic policy in the 1920s leading to the depression; foreign policy in the 1960s leading to defeat in Vietnam). A hyperconsensus situation lacks the challenge and debate between contending groups that produces either realistic analysis or effective compromises—the society suffers the "perils of groupthink."⁷

Which of these situations are we in today, and toward which are we moving? Clearly, the hyperconsensus on foreign policy was dispelled by the failure in Vietnam, and the economic policy consensus of the postwar years no longer works. Will the leaders of the various powerful institutions work out a generally accepted compromise on domestic and foreign policy? Will two opposing coalitions offering clear alternatives develop, and one win a political struggle and impose its policies successfully? Will there be vacillation, lack of coherent policy, obstruction of action by powerful minorities, and a drastic worsening of the conditions of life for most Americans? If so, for how long, leading to what resolution?

A Survey of American Leaders

We may be able to understand better how U.S. leaders will respond to the crises of the 1980s if we examine how they responded to those of the early 1970s. In 1971-1972 a research group at Columbia University's Bureau of Applied Social Research interviewed several hundred leaders of major govern-

mental and nongovernmental institutions. They were asked about their perceptions of the main problems facing the country and about their activities in trying to influence public policy and public opinion. Most of them also filled out a long questionnaire soliciting their opinions on economic, foreign policy, and social issues—both current and potential. From these opinions we were able to construct some underlying dimensions of attitudes that are likely to influence their responses to whatever particular problems arise for decision. They were also asked about their sources of information on public issues, whom they talked with, and who influenced their opinions, as well as group memberships, public activities, careers, and social origins. These data, even though eight years old, may help us to understand why American leaders have differing views about what action would be appropriate to deal with current crises; this in turn may suggest what would be required to produce either a general elite consensus or an effective majority coalition capable of enacting a coherent program.

Leadership in the United States today is almost always based on a present or past top position in a powerful institution.⁸ We started by identifying categories of organizations whose leaders controlled substantial resources of money or manpower and who could communicate with the public, influence the choice of candidates, and either influence government policy or have a direct impact on society through the policies of their own institutions:

1. The 500 largest industrial corporations, represented by their chief executive officers or presidents
2. Three hundred very large nonindustrial corporations—banks, insurance companies, large retail firms, utilities, transportation and construction firms—also represented by their chief executives
3. Families with great wealth—represented by individuals reputed to be “centimillionaires”
4. The seventy-five largest national labor unions, represented by their presidents plus a few top AFL-CIO national officers
5. The mass communications media, represented by publishers or editors of big-city newspapers and large-circulation magazines dealing with social issues, by news executives and commentators in the three big TV networks, and by some leading newspaper columnists
6. The Democratic and Republican parties, represented by their national committees and the chairmen of the larger state and city organizations
7. Voluntary associations, either large interest groups or very active issue-oriented groups, represented by both their elected presidents and their permanent directors (divided for analysis into three subgroups: organizations of minority ethnic groups; mainly liberal professional and issue-oriented groups such as environmentalists, social workers, scientists, etc.; and mainly conservative professional and issue-oriented groups such as Bar and

medical associations, business organizations, and ideological conservative groups)

8. The presidential administration, represented by high politically appointed administrators—under- and assistant-secretaries, general counsel, members of appointed boards and commissions
9. The permanent federal bureaucracy, represented by top-grade career civil servants (G.S. 17 and 18) with program-administering responsibilities
10. Congress—including all senators and key members of House committees from both parties as the group to be sampled

This selection leaves out certain institutions that might be worthy of study: intellectual and academic leaders,⁹ major state and city officials, military leaders,¹⁰ the federal judiciary, religious leaders, partners in large law firms, and the executives and trustees of large private foundations. However, the leaders themselves did not mention very many people in the sectors that were omitted, and the survey covered most of the powerful organizations in American society.

Between June 1971 and April 1972, about fifty leaders from each of the ten selected sectors were interviewed. On the basis of their statements of who influenced them, with whom they discussed public issues, and whom they considered influential, an additional group of opinion leaders was identified and those not already in the sample were interviewed. A total of 545 leaders were interviewed out of 795 attempted interviews—a completion rate of 69 percent.¹¹

Cleavages and Consensus in Elite Attitudes, 1971-1972

Attitudes toward public issues clustered strongly into two main dimensions, one of economic liberalism-conservatism, the other of “dove-hawk” positions on foreign policy. These two dimensions were moderately related: if we divided the sample in half on each, about two-thirds of the economic liberals were doves and two-thirds of the economic conservatives were hawks. There was enough crossover, however, so that no single polarization emerged—a fact that may have helped moderate conflict and ease the solution of the Vietnam issue.

There was clearly a great deal of class division on issues relating to the distribution of income and power (Table 1). Labor leaders favored, and business leaders opposed, a variety of redistributive tax and welfare policies, as well as some increase in the workers’ role in the plant and the power of the poor in the community. Businessmen, on the other hand, favored compulsory arbitration of union wage demands and low or no capital gains taxes; they believed that the pricing system was competitive and not administered, and that the environmental problem was exaggerated. Still, the consensus of the postwar period was shown by both groups agreeing on the Keynesian position that spending should not be reduced in time of recession, that the government had some responsibility for creating jobs, and that there should be some action to alleviate poverty, including a guaranteed minimum income at some level (though they disagreed on the level). Both groups rejected socializing big corporations, setting a top

Table 1. Class Consensus and Dissensus

	Favored by Business	Not Favored by Business
Favored by Labor	(1) Do not cut spending during recessions (2) Wage and price controls (1971-1972) (6) Federal job creation for unemployed (43) Too much is not being done for the poor	(7) Poverty could be eliminated in ten years (8) End special tax exemptions like oil depletion (10) More effective inheritance taxes (14) Welfare reform should be more generous (30) Political power of poor should be increased (31) Workers should have larger role in management (41) Heavy taxes on industrial activities that pollute (42) Income differences should be reduced (45) FBI practices threaten civil liberties
Not Favored by Labor	(3) Pricing system is competitive, not administered or monopolistic (5) Compulsory arbitration of wage disputes (12c) Capital gains tax less than 30 percent (13) Nixon Family Assistance Plan (44) Supreme Court handcuffs police (46) Environmental problem is exaggerated	(4) Big corporations should be taken out of private ownership (11) A top limit on incomes (39) A worker's son doesn't have much chance to get ahead

Numbers are those of questions in questionnaire; complete wording and percentages agreeing in each group are given in A. H. Barton, "Consensus and Conflict Among American Leaders," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 38 (Winter 1974-1975), 507-530.

limit on incomes, and the belief that mobility out of the working class was impossible. There was general acceptance of "welfare capitalism" at the same time as there was a strong, largely latent division on how equalitarian such a society should be.

Economic liberalism-conservatism produced a three-way division of the elite groups surveyed (Figure 1, horizontal dimension). The labor leaders were joined by the minority-group leaders and by voluntary associations representing

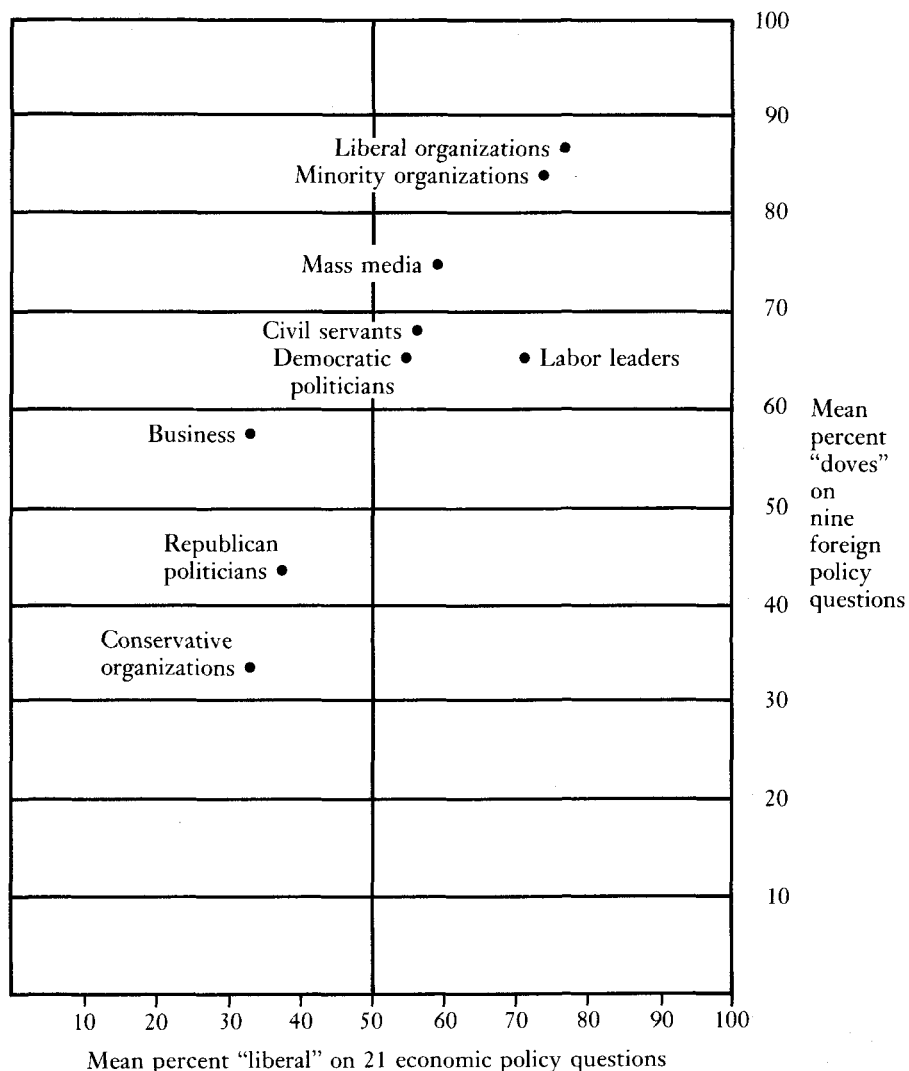


Figure 1. Location of Elite Groups on Economic and Foreign Policy (1971-1972)

politically liberal professional groups (scientists, university professors, social workers, major religious federation leaders, teachers) and reform-oriented causes (environmentalists, women's rights groups, public-interest groups, small farmers). The business leaders were joined on the conservative side by Republican politicians and by conservative professional and ideological groups (the professional associations of medicine and law, veterans organizations, large farmers groups, and conservative ideologists). In the middle of the economic scale are the mass media leaders, the career civil servants, and the Democratic politicians, taken as a group. The first two groups might be expected to have some professional interest in being moderates; that Democratic politicians also take this position, while Republican politicians are almost identical with business in

economic attitudes, demonstrates the problems experienced by the most liberal groups in securing political representation.

Groups in the middle range are there either because they were evenly divided on issues or because their members took a moderate position. On most items, those in the middle groups agreed or disagreed with qualifications more than did those in the polar groups, and they might be expected to play the role of compromise builders. At the same time, these groups include supporters of both strong liberal and strong conservative positions.

A rather different lineup of elite sectors appears on the foreign policy dimension (Figure 1, vertical dimension). The mass media, along with the minority group leaders and the liberal organizations, were at the "dove" pole in 1971-1972, while the Republican politicians and conservative organizations were at the "hawk" pole. The businessmen, close to the Republicans on most issues, had withdrawn to a middle position along with the Democratic politicians and civil servants. This left the Republican politicians out on a limb, as the Nixon Administration tried painfully to withdraw from the war which the Establishment had turned against. At the same time the doves suffered from the fact that they did not have firm support from labor leaders and Democratic politicians; the charting of the locations of the elite groups in the winter of 1971-1972 foreshadows the Democratic split in the 1972 presidential campaign.

The most divisive foreign policy issues, if we compare the dove and hawk clusters, were whether the United States should withdraw from Vietnam, whether we had contributed to the Cold War by overreactions, whether we should always keep ahead of the Russians in nuclear weapons, whether defense spending should be reduced or not, and whether there should be a move toward dismantling military alliances on both sides of the Cold War. At the same time, large majorities of all groups agreed on a number of positions: that we should not use nuclear weapons in Southeast Asia; that Third World revolutions are basically nationalist and not controlled from Russia or China; and that we should accept socialist governments in Latin America.

Two other surveys asked some of these questions of military men and intellectuals. The military leaders were close to civilian elites on questions about the Third World and the Cold War, but much more strongly opposed to cuts in defense spending, ending military alliances, and accepting nuclear parity.¹² They were also about as conservative as the business leaders on domestic issues. A survey of 110 leading "general intellectuals" showed the majority of them to be strong doves and socioeconomic liberals,¹³ but the majority had been supporters of containment of Soviet-style communism and had not fundamentally changed their world view as a result of Vietnam.

On environmental questions the lineup of groups was very similar to that on economic liberalism-conservatism, except that the mass media leaders move into the cluster with the labor, liberal, and minority leaders. On civil liberties questions—whether the police are unduly restricted by the Supreme Court and whether FBI and military intelligence activities were a threat to civil liberties in the United States—the general liberal-conservative lineup is also maintained, and again the media move into the liberal camp.

Attitudes toward the youth rebellion and expressions of overall confidence or lack of confidence in American institutions formed a cluster closely related to

the foreign policy divisions. On these cultural-style issues the Democratic politicians and labor leaders were even more conservative than the business leaders, although Republican politicians were more conservative still. The dove coalition of the mass media leaders, minority group leaders, and liberal organizations was relatively tolerant of the youth rebellion (although far from agreeing with its extreme positions and tactics) and rather critical of the political system's functioning. This attitude cleavage on cultural style interacted with the foreign policy issue to disrupt the traditional Democratic coalition in the 1972 presidential campaign.

The Leaders' Issue Agenda, 1971-1972

The wide differences between business and labor leaders on some economic attitudes, and between Republican politicians and mass media leaders on some foreign policy attitudes, create an obvious potential for political conflict. But the conflict will not become actual unless the issues are raised and a decision is required—unless the issues are given a place on the political agenda. Leaders and organizations are not constantly pressing for every policy they favor in principle; they have learned to ration their efforts, and they know that some issues cost a great deal in terms of the intensity of opposition aroused. Groups use their available resources to raise those issues that are of greatest concern to their constituents and on which they believe they can win practical gains. Of course a group may have an issue forced upon it unwillingly by the actions of other groups—as the environmentalist movement and the media forced the pollution issue onto the businessman's agenda, or as the bureaucrats and liberal politicians have been forced to respond to the tax revolt. Drastic events, at home and abroad, may also raise issues that nobody wants, like a depression or a threat of war.

To find out what was considered currently important in the period of the study, we asked the leaders a series of questions, starting with, "What are the most important problems facing the United States today?" The leaders provided the following "agenda":

Economic problems (66% of leaders)

- Inflation—34%
- Unemployment—17%
- Foreign trade, balance of payments—8%
- Other, general—25%

Foreign policy (58% of leaders)

- War in Indochina—31%
- World peace—9%
- National defense—5%
- Arms control—3%
- Other, general—18%

Social problems (62% of leaders)

- Race relations—31%
- Urban problems, housing—16%

Law and order, drugs—14%

Poverty and welfare—11%

Education—7%

Health care—5%

Other, general—7%

Values and cultural problems (37% of leaders)

Political polarization, lack of consensus—10%

Lack of understanding of institutions, lack of goals—11%

Youth alienation, youth culture—7%

Moral change, decay—6%

Other, general—12%

Environmental problems (22% of leaders)

Government reform, leadership, participation problems (11% of leaders)

The problems facing the United States today as seen by the leaders did not include many of the issues of redistribution of income, wealth, and power that the attitude survey revealed as the most divisive. Reducing income differences, increasing inheritance or capital gains taxes, giving workers a greater role in management, or taking some action to counter monopoly were simply not mentioned spontaneously as current problems by the leaders of major institutions.

Asking leaders to rate the importance of a list of nineteen issues produced a similar rank order. Eight issues were rated “high priority” by a majority of leaders: urban problems, race relations, inflation, pollution, the war in Indochina, arms control, unemployment, and poverty. (Arms control seemed more important once they were reminded of it.) Among the lowest priorities were power of labor unions, power of large corporations, and threats to privacy and freedom.

In response to a question about the issues on which they had actively tried to affect policies or to inform public opinion, a majority claimed some activity in the areas of race relations (64 percent), urban problems (55 percent), and the environment (52 percent), followed by fairly large minorities active on inflation (46 percent), poverty and welfare problems (42 percent), and unemployment and recession (40 percent). Foreign policy issues involved only minorities of elites—34 percent on the Vietnam war, 22 percent on national defense, and 16 percent on arms control, the lowest ranking item out of the nineteen on the list. A further question about their main area of activity disclosed a wide dispersion of efforts. No more than 10 percent of the leaders were most active in any one problem area as we categorized them. The main activities of most leaders focused on more specialized issues than their definitions of the “most important problems facing the country”: usually on policy problems related to their responsibilities as leaders of particular organizations.

Looking briefly at the issues on which decisions were actually made during the early 1970s, we can see that elite disagreements led to serious weaknesses in decision-making. The issue dominating the news in late 1971 was inflation. This created a major division between the economically liberal groups that favored wage and price controls and business and Republican leaders who op-

posed them. President Nixon's sudden adoption of controls in mid-August of 1971 dramatically shifted the opinions of business and Republican leaders and created a temporary elite consensus favoring controls. But while price rises were greatly reduced in the ensuing year, the Administration did not succeed in reducing underlying inflationary pressures—indeed, it expanded the money supply in advance of the 1972 election—and once the president was reelected, the controls were removed, and inflation resumed. The leadership had clearly not dealt successfully with inflation.

The foreign policy field was dominated by the war in Indochina. The Administration was attempting a contradictory policy of trying to negotiate a compromise with the Vietnamese Communists while withdrawing American troops to quiet domestic objections to the war. Majorities of over 90 percent in every elite group favored reducing U.S. involvement; however, there were major divisions on whether to simply withdraw or to try to negotiate a compromise or strengthen South Vietnam to prevent complete Communist victory. This issue disrupted the Democratic presidential campaign of 1972. However, it also was the major cause of the disintegration of the Nixon presidency, since his efforts to control domestic dissent and keep “secret” his bombing of Laos and Cambodia led to illegal domestic spying and ultimately to Watergate, the cover-up, the exposure by the media, impeachment, and resignation. American leaders are still arguing over the “lessons of Vietnam”;¹⁴ whatever they are, neither our intervention nor our withdrawal was an example of successful policymaking.

The main social policy issue on the agenda in the early 1970s was the proposal for a guaranteed minimum income for families, developed for the Nixon Administration by Daniel Moynihan.¹⁵ This plan was supported by large majorities of big business leaders, the media, Republican politicians, and civil servants; but it was opposed from the right by Southern Democrats and some Republicans and from the left by many labor leaders, liberal Democrats, and minority group leaders. The resulting deadlock ended with nothing being done at all.

These examples show that severe elite dissensus makes it difficult to secure effective policies; and that even an apparent consensus induced by dramatic presidential leadership can fail to produce results if it does not extend to the hard decisions actually required by the problem.

Elite Cleavages and Current Problems

The political agenda of the United States in the late 1970s has been dominated by the two related economic problems of inflation and the growing shortage of cheap energy sources. As we noted earlier, these issues interlock with others in a Gordian knot: the main alternatives to oil that are actually available—coal and nuclear fission—carry with them poorly predictable environmental costs and dangers. The use of the price mechanism to encourage conservation and the development of new energy sources raises divisive questions of equity between social groups and adds inflationary pressure. The use of budget-cutting and reduction of the money supply to fight inflation leads to cutting social programs for the poor and to the imposition of high unemployment on the working class, especially on minorities and younger people. Pro-

posals to attack inflation from the supply side ask for less income and capital gains taxes on the higher income groups and allow corporations to make higher profits with less taxes. Further exacerbating the problem is the fact that the Soviet Union's unrestrained competition in both conventional and nuclear arms races is creating pressure for shifting more of available U.S. resources to weapons production.

Thus, a series of difficult and divisive issues has been forced onto the political agenda at the same time. Earlier policies of "guns and butter" and of paying everybody off from a national dividend of increased productivity cannot be used in the face of resource shortages, environmental costs, and externally induced cost increases. Politics tends to become a zero-sum game in which the gains of some are the losses of others—a situation that makes compromise very hard to attain. How is the American system going to respond?

In the absence of a resurvey of those occupying elite positions today, I cannot offer figures showing whether consensus has increased or decreased, or how new issues fit into the old conflicts. However, I suspect that the underlying beliefs and attitudes are slow to change. What changes most in the short run is the saliency of issues. If we assume a relative constancy of basic attitudes, what do the data collected in the early 1970s suggest about reactions to the current crises?

1. *The Democratic Moderates' Solution.* Our survey data showed that the Democratic politicians range from economic conservatives to strong liberals, but with the center of gravity at a moderate position between labor, minorities, and liberal elites on the one hand and business and the Republican politicians on the other. The present Carter Administration, which appoints business executives and conventional economists to manage the economy, attempting a compromise between Keynesianism and monetarism, represents just such a leadership. The result is a watered-down version of conservative economics—high interest rates, cutbacks in government spending, high unemployment, some tax concessions to corporations—which they hope will reduce inflation and permit later restoration of high employment without offending the unions too much or causing too much protest from unemployed minorities, young people, and workers in declining areas.

However, these policies conflict with the egalitarian attitudes of their labor, minority, and liberal-professional elite support groups, and of a considerable part of their mass voting base. These groups object to the class bias of policies that impose most burdens on the working class and the poor, while offering tax benefits to corporations and the upper income groups. What businessmen and conservative politicians see as the "natural working of the market" appears to these groups as an economic injustice, and they are skeptical as to how "free" the market is in an age of concentration of business.

If the Carter policies actually work to reduce inflation, and if employment then rises without triggering a new round of wage-price increases, the moderate leadership of the Democratic coalition will probably come through the recession, strained but intact, and continue to govern the country (assuming no further foreign policy disasters). On the other hand, if these policies are fundamentally unworkable—if they don't bring inflation down to acceptable

levels or do so only at the cost of massive unemployment, business bankruptcies, and loss of living standards—then something more drastic will happen to the party system.

2. *The Republican Conservative Solution.* The Republican party is as full of contradictions as the Democrats. Financed by big business owners and managers, local medium and small business, wealthy professionals, and ideological sympathizers, it has always been divided between those who accept some welfare-state reforms to make capitalism more defensible and those who from self-interest or ideology demand a move back to laissez-faire. The party almost destroyed itself in the 1930s fighting the welfare state. By the 1950s it not only accepted but extended social security and unemployment insurance and saw its presidential candidate elected twice—although the Democrats still tended to control Congress. In 1964 the party tested the theory that a large, latent conservative vote was waiting to be offered “a choice, not an echo,” and lost by a huge margin. Many Republican politicians and businessmen have accepted organized labor, but strong elements within business are now campaigning for a union-free environment in an attempt to wipe out trade unions by a variety of means, both legal and illegal. Despite the large majority of business leaders and Republican politicians who professed Keynesian policies in the survey, a right-wing network of local business and conservative organizations has pushed through more than half the state legislatures a proposed constitutional amendment that would forbid federal deficit spending.

The dominant anti-inflation theory of business and its political representatives in recent years has been monetarism. This argues that cutting back on the money supply will lower demand, produce sufficient unemployment to curb wage increases, and allow the economy to get back into equilibrium once the inflationary psychology and the pressures of excess demand are eliminated. To be effective this policy also requires a drastic cutting back of federal spending to eliminate deficits, which are monetized and generate new inflationary pressure. Usually the first federal programs to be eliminated are those intended to reduce inequalities and provide opportunities for the poor. Other elements in the conservative solution are well stated in a recent Chase Bank advertisement, which calls for adopting a national sales tax and reducing the tax burden on business and investors to discourage consumption and encourage savings and investment. Needless to say, the ad does not specify whose consumption would be inhibited nor whose savings and investments increased by these policies.

The current leading Republican presidential candidate has been forthrightly advocating the elimination of the progressive income tax, gift and inheritance taxes, and capital gains taxes. At the same time, he advocates a 30 percent income tax reduction without any compensating cut in spending, on the theory that the tax cut will so expand the economy that the revenues will be made up quickly out of growth in the GNP. This ingenious theory eliminates some of the conflicts that have in the past inhibited Republican election promises.

These theories combine the advocacy of the immediate economic interests of big business executives and stockholders, wealthy professionals, and other high income people with the promise that, by rewarding these groups, a bigger pie will be had by all, so that the workingman will end up better off in absolute

terms than under more egalitarian and security-oriented policies. By making "government" and "taxes" their targets, the Republican politicians hope to win over enough of the very large white-collar stratum and some of the blue-collar workers to their policies of growth through inequality. They hope not only to elect their presidential candidate, but to defeat the more liberal Democratic congressmen as well, so that they can rule through the traditional coalition of Republicans and conservative Democrats that has dominated so many congresses.

Suppose a conservative coalition wins the presidency and Congress, and adopts these policies. To succeed politically it would need to produce the following results:

- A major reduction in the rate of price increases
- A relatively short recession rather than prolonged mass unemployment
- Acceptance by organized labor of real wage cuts in a period of higher corporate profits and managerial incomes
- Recovery of productivity so that workers' real incomes begin to rise
- Energy production sufficient for these rising living standards without such environmental damage as to antagonize large numbers of voters
- Avoidance of major riots, demonstrations, hunger marches, etc., by the urban minority poor, through maintaining sufficient welfare programs or providing increased employment

If conservative policies achieve these results, the public will hardly turn against the workers of this economic miracle. The gains of the highest income groups and the costs to the poor and temporarily unemployed can be overlooked if there are gains within a reasonable time for the vast majority. Such economic success would require the labor-liberal-minority leaders to modify their beliefs and programs, as the Republican-business elites did in the 1940s and 1950s; otherwise, they would become irrelevant to their own constituencies. But if the policies are a failure in the personal experience of the majority of the electorate, then a major political turnover would occur in 1984.

Conceivable Elite Consensus: A Negotiated Economy

Suppose it becomes apparent either in 1980 or toward 1984 that neither the moderate-conservative policies of the present Democratic leadership nor the neo-conservative policies of the Republicans are workable—that they either do not reduce inflation to manageable levels or do so only at the cost of enormous long-term unemployment. Such failures and conflicts might either turn the elites of the country to an effort at compromise on some new approach or move them toward a more radical cleavage. Could a new economic program be negotiated that would be acceptable to business, labor, minorities, and liberals?

In some West European countries we see a system of national negotiation between large, centrally organized economic groups of labor, business, white-

collar employees, and farmers, with government participation. Negotiations involve trade-offs between wage restraint in union demands, union acceptance of new technologies, governmental aid in the form of tax benefits or assistance programs, and structural changes such as worker representation on corporation boards. Government and labor are involved in decisions on plant shutdowns and transfers and with retraining and relocation of displaced workers. Meanwhile, the newly enlarged European free trade area makes administered pricing and cartels harder to maintain.

While the West European "negotiated economies" have kept inflation low in normal times and have contained the impact of rising energy prices, they have not been without problems. Restraint in union wage agreements still allows "wage drift" as employers reward workers with scarce skills beyond contract levels (attempts are now being made to allow for this in the negotiated increases). The white-collar unions in Sweden went on strike against a narrowing of differentials with the blue-collar workers. Also in Sweden a split on nuclear energy brought down the Social Democratic government which had managed a negotiated economy successfully for over forty years and achieved a living standard higher than that of the United States. The same issue divided the bourgeois coalition government, and it has had to be resolved by a referendum. But so far Scandinavia and Western Europe (Britain excepted) have done better than the United States in dealing with current problems of inflation, employment, equity, and the environment.

Such a system requires institutional structures and elite attitudes that the United States does not now possess. Labor movements, business organizations, and farm organizations must be strongly centralized to engage in national bargaining and to enforce agreements on their own members. There is a need for a feeling of community and trust, which only grew up in Europe under extreme pressures—in the Resistance movements in occupied Europe, in the post-Hitler disaster area of West Germany, in the need to rebuild shattered economies. These systems have generally operated with a social-democratic party in power or participating in a government coalition, so that the labor movement felt well-enough represented politically to shift from free collective bargaining to labor-business-government planning of an incomes policy. The parties have been program-oriented and operating in a system of parliamentary responsibility where the executive and legislative branches were not separated. American political parties, the Congress, the labor movement, and business organizations lack the structure and connections required for the successful development of such a system. Short of a disaster situation, it is questionable whether they would want to try a negotiated economy.

A Possible Labor-Liberal-Minorities Coalition

Economic failure by either a moderate-Democratic or conservative-Republican administration after the 1980 elections is a possibility that has to be seriously considered. Inflation may be too deeply built into our institutional structure, our administered pricing, our union wage demands, and our "invisible handshake" of wage and price policies¹⁶ which seek to avoid harsh violations of mu-

tual expectations. Monetary policies may simply produce ever-increasing unemployment if pushed to the point where they restrain prices and wages. The current supply-side remedies of tax cuts without spending cuts may prove to be just another campaign flim-flam or, more charitably, a misjudgment of where we are on the "Laffer curve." Things may in fact get worse, and the public may demand something new.

The result might be the emergence of a programmatic party representing the interests and beliefs of the labor movement, the minorities, and the ideologically liberal elements of white-collar and professional groups that have supported the Democrats in the past. The logical framework should be the Democratic party, but its very organization is the first obstacle. At the local level, party organizations are mostly oriented toward the patronage of jobs and contracts and the advancement of personal careers rather than programs. The party professionals are not particularly liberal as a group. At the top level, the congressional leadership, the big campaign contributors, and the professional party managers are also only moderately liberal on issues of economic policy, and are closely involved with various business interests. It would take a major effort by a labor-minorities-liberal coalition to remake the Democratic party. Professional politicians have worked with liberal congressmen, mayors, and governors, but can they share power over the party organization itself with programmatic reformers? The 1972 experience indicates the problems, although a labor-liberal-minorities coalition that learned from that experience could presumably do better.

The unions have been a mainstay of recent Democratic presidential and congressional campaigns through their contributions of money and manpower, and could form a major basis of a program-oriented Left party. However, they do not have the European tradition of direct affiliation with a social-democratic party and are legally restrained in many ways. It would be a break with American labor traditions to create a permanent mass-based membership party. Minority organizations have trouble organizing a constituency that still has relatively low incomes and more than its share of social problems. Intellectuals, liberal professionals, and liberally minded white-collar people have always been willing to organize for specific causes, but might have great difficulty making the sustained effort and stringent compromises that a broad-based coalition party requires. Putting these groups together into a programmatic liberal-labor party would be no picnic.

Nevertheless, threats to living standards from inflation and unemployment, cuts in existing social programs, threats to programs for worker safety, consumer protection, and environmental protection all create a motivation for these groups to come together with liberal Democratic politicians to transform the Democratic party or, failing this, to create a new party. The commitment of these groups to greater equality rather than less, their concern with full employment, their perception that pricing by big corporations is not in fact competitive, their concern with environmental problems, their commitment to civil liberties, and their rejection of patronage politics and corruption all provide the basis for their trying to turn the Democratic party into something more like a European social-democratic party. If they could create an organized mass mem-

bership committed to programs, such a party could impose discipline on its legislators and reduce the influence of localized and narrow pressure groups, which now devastates efficiency and coherence in government programs.

What would be the program of such a programmatic labor-liberal-minorities party? It might well adopt the idea of the negotiated economy already described: restrain inflation by a combination of negotiated settlements encompassing both wages and the profits and salaries of the business elite, and policies that assist technical modernization and efficiency of business. The need for severe restrictions on the money supply would be greatly reduced by such an incomes policy settlement, and levels of unemployment could be reduced by aids to labor retraining and mobility rather than protectionism or subsidy to declining industries.

The negotiated economy might then be imposed on business by the victory of a labor-liberal-minorities coalition, just as the New Deal was imposed by a broad electoral coalition in the 1930s. There would undoubtedly be bitter complaints, but such a program should not be intolerable to the big business leadership, which finally learned to live with the welfare state, Keynesianism, and unionism and might now learn to come to terms with post-Keynesian social-democratic policies.

The energy problem also might be subject to negotiations. There have been consensual proposals developed between representatives of environmentalists and the coal industry, for instance. The problem of nuclear policy is made more difficult by the past errors and dishonesty of governmental and private industry nuclear authorities and by the absolutism of the "no nuke" activists. Some European countries have tried various forms of citizen involvement in energy planning and site location decisions, with varying success.¹⁷ This is an area in which the natural and social sciences need to collaborate in designing institutions to promote rationality.

It is, of course, possible that business might resist an imposed negotiated economy out of ideological purism, a belief that it can't work, or simple unwillingness to share economic power and privilege. "Business confidence" could be lost,¹⁸ private investment could fall, capital could flee to safe havens in authoritarian countries abroad, leading to even more unemployment and lower productivity. Such a failure of a workable compromise might force the labor-liberal-minorities coalition toward actual socialization of capital. This is something for which there has historically been little desire on the part of these groups, but it might appear as a practical necessity in a crisis where traditional measures have proved inadequate and business seems to be working against the national interest by moving the nation's capital out of the country. As a result, the United States might become the first Western nation to adopt actual socialism, as distinct from the welfare-state capitalism mixed with national planning and public enterprise found in Western Europe and Scandinavia; or it might suffer a political deadlock, even a resort to fascism.

Such a program of social control of capital might take the form advocated by the Swedish Social Democrats—control over industry by union investment funds rather than by the government. Since we are already faced with arguments—to quote from Chase Bank again¹⁹—that "outmoded machinery and insufficient capital result in our achieving less than our full potential," so that "our

basic plant must be rebuilt," and at the same time are told that future social security benefits are not being secured by present investment, the use of social security taxes to buy out control of big corporations and provide new investment might be a very American solution. If "we" need a trillion dollars invested over the next ten years, why shouldn't "we," the American people, own it and be able to retire on it? The current benefit payments could be partly supported from other sources, such as oil windfall profits taxes and closing tax loopholes. Obviously, the problems of insuring rational investment policies rather than pork-barrel use of the funds, and building-in incentives to take risks rather than pursue bureaucratic policies of playing safe, both have to be dealt with. However, it should be stressed that this proposal does not mean turning over the American economy to the present type of patronage-oriented party or the present type of public bureaucracy which has grown up in a system of patronage parties and pressure-group domination. A very different kind of party organization would be required for the installation and successful operation of a decentralized socialist system.

These scenarios of a programmatic labor-liberal-minorities party being formed and winning the election of 1984 are obviously speculative, but they are not incompatible with the information we have on elite and public attitudes and with the previous history of the United States and other industrialized democracies. They depend, of course, on the assumption that more conservative policies are not going to work satisfactorily from the viewpoint of the majority of the American people.

The Foreign Policy Cleavage

In these scenarios we have ignored the foreign policy cleavage. As we have seen, this cuts across both the economically liberal and conservative camps. Within the Republican party there is a long-standing division between Eastern Establishment moderates, associated with the Council on Foreign Relations and the Trilateral Commission, and those who favor toughness at all risks, who tend to come from the *nouveau riche* and their political representatives in the Sunbelt: the Rockefellers, Scrantons, and Percys versus the Reagans, Connallys, and Goldwaters. Many moderate Republicans refused to support Goldwater in 1964, and serious mistrust of the judgment of each group by the other continues—over the Panama Canal issue, SALT, and so on.

The foreign policy issue tore the Democratic party apart in 1972, and the questions of how to deal with the Soviet Union and with Marxist and other revolutionary movements in the rest of the world have not become less controversial since then. The labor leaders, the economically liberal Democratic politicians, and the intellectuals are internally divided on these problems. Has the Soviet Union abandoned efforts to restrain the arms race, or is it only responding to American armament increases? What is the appropriate U.S. policy in terms of missile systems, conventional arms production, military manpower policy, and military or covert interventions?

American reactions to revolutions in other countries are enormously complicated by the question of their effect on the world balance of power in relation to the Soviet Union. If the United States always opposes revolutions against

dictators and oppressive ruling classes, then all revolutions have to depend on the Soviet Union or China for help. On the other hand, it is hard to imagine American businessmen and conservative politicians accepting socialism as a solution for much of the rest of the world. This might be a great advantage for a social-democratic or democratic-socialist movement: it could offer an alternative to the choice between conservative authoritarianism and Soviet-style authoritarianism. However, the economic conditions of impoverished countries hardly permit democratic socialism either, in a Western sense; they are likely to have some kind of authoritarian government even when it is based on a mass movement, and the cultural values of both leaders and masses are likely to be quite different from those of Western democrats.

Political movements in the United States, therefore, have to come to terms with a world that does not fit American assumptions and ideologies. This is an act of intellectual wisdom that has so far been beyond most liberal and conservative leaders, who continue to talk about "the free world" or "democracy" in relation to countries with such inequality of wealth and education, and such differences in cultural values, that these concepts simply cannot be applied. In relation to the Soviet Union itself the problems of understanding are enormous. Liberals tend to project onto Soviet leaders their own concern with restraining the nuclear arms race and their "balance of terror" doctrine that modest nuclear forces capable of a second strike only should be enough for either side. Conservatives seem unable to take the imaginative step of seeing their own proposed program from the Soviet leaders' viewpoint and modifying it in ways that would create a basis for mutual restraint. Strategic doctrines and assessments of Soviet (and U.S.) doctrines and intentions have polarized American elites into dove and hawk camps that mistrust and stereotype one another. The resulting debates bring forth the worst features of American political style: accusations of weakness and lack of virility against those trying to work for moderation, of creating a war mentality and trying to divert attention from domestic problems against those who favor increased military strength and involvement in the world balance of power.

Programmatic parties are obviously more vulnerable to splits over foreign policy than are looser aggregations of interests such as we now have. The ambiguous nature of remote realities and the emotional loading of the fears and hostilities involved are impediments to the creation of consensus or the maintenance of a coalition. A party trying to follow a path of moderation—of restraining the interventionist impulse while at the same time trying to deter Soviet intervention, of limiting the arms race while maintaining a workable balance of power, of reaching what are necessarily unsatisfying compromises with foreign elites hostile to our values—is vulnerable to inflammatory attacks from both superpatriots and pacifists (there being many more of the former). A conservative party trying to sell growth through inequality is naturally tempted to use patriotic rhetoric and to exploit the near-universal hostility of Americans to Soviet-style communism to distract attention from economic issues and win working-class support. Many conservative leaders believe this black-and-white world view; others may use it for political advantage and hope to quietly ignore it if and when they win office and have to deal with reality. The Soviet dictator-

ship, given its own internal control problems, is not likely to be helpful to the creation of more social-democratic regimes in the world.

A winning political coalition, whether based on labor, liberals, and minorities or on business, conservative white-collar employees, and "patriots," has to develop a foreign policy that deals with the realities of the world. The U.S. elites learned to run the economy fairly successfully in the 1950s and 1960s. They may learn, if only by trial and error, what actions are appropriate to deal with the problems of the economy and the ecology during the 1980s. Trial and error, however, is not a safe way to learn to run a literally explosive world system. Working out some principles of world order on which the elites of all the major powers can operate peacefully is the problem that should be at the top of all their agendas.

REFERENCES

¹See Samuel Stouffer, *Communism, Conformity and Civil Liberties*, for a comparison of local elite and public opinions on the "communism" issues. David Truman, "The American System in Crisis," *Political Science Quarterly* 74 (December 1959), 481-97, discusses the ethical and political-system problems of the use of McCarthyism by the Republican political elite.

²The classic analysis by Charles Beard, *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution* (1913), has since been reanalyzed and reinterpreted by more systematic historians—for instance, Robert E. Brown, *Charles Beard and the Constitution* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1965)—in ways that reduce the emphasis on personal self-interest but retain the idea of elite initiation and compromise.

³Lawrence Goodwyn, *The Populist Moment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), argues that the failure of the farm cooperative movement to develop, due to its inability to win government support of its credit institutions, destroyed the possibilities of democratic agrarianism in modern America and left big business in control of society for the next generation at least.

⁴Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), summarizes a large body of empirical research on the origins and motives of the Progressives.

⁵Fred L. Block, *The Origins of International Economic Disorder* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), gives a quick summary of this period with references in introducing his excellent analysis of U.S. international monetary policy after World War II.

⁶Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., *The Age of Roosevelt* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1958-1960), in three volumes, *The Crisis of the Old Order*, *The Coming of the New Deal*, and *The Politics of Upheaval*, presents a detailed history of the period from a liberal viewpoint.

⁷Irving Janis, *The Victims of Groupthink* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972), discusses several examples of this process in the foreign policy decision area.

⁸C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), and most more recent elitist analysts, such as G. W. Domhoff, *Who Rules America* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1967), and T. R. Dye, *Who's Running America* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1976), all emphasize the organizational base of leadership in the United States. Those who argue for a Marxist capitalist ruling class are divided between those who emphasize the corporation and the wealthy family as the primary controlling institution.

⁹See Charles Kadushin, *The American Intellectual Elite* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973), and Everett C. Ladd, Jr., and S. M. Lipset, *The Divided Academy: Professors and Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975), for two survey-based studies.

¹⁰Bruce M. Russett and Elizabeth C. Hanson, *Interest and Ideology* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1975), ch. 3, reports a survey of military leaders using many of the same questions as the American Leaders Survey.

¹¹A. H. Barton, "Consensus and Conflict among American Leaders," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 38 (Winter 1974-1975), 507-30.

¹²Russett and Hanson, *Interest and Ideology*.

¹³Kadushin, *The American Intellectual Elite*.

¹⁴Ole Holsti and James N. Rosenau, "America's Foreign Policy Agenda: The Post-Vietnam Beliefs of American Leaders," in C. W. Kegley, Jr., and P. J. McGowan, eds., *Challenges to America: United States Foreign Policy in the 1980s* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1979), and "Vietnam, Consensus, and the Belief Systems of American Leaders," *World Politics* 32 (1979), 1-56.

¹⁵Daniel P. Moynihan, *The Politics of a Guaranteed Income* (New York: Random House, 1973), gives a detailed, if not unbiased, account.

¹⁶Arthur Okun, "The Invisible Handshake and the Inflationary Process," *Challenge* 22 (January/February 1980), 5-12.

¹⁷Dorothy Nelkin and Michael Pollack, "Problems and Procedures in the Regulation of Technological Risks," in Carol H. Weiss and Allen H. Barton, eds., *Making Bureaucracies Work* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1980), 259-278.

¹⁸Charles Lindblom, *Politics and Markets* (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

¹⁹"How long can we ask the American worker to be Superman?" advertisement, Business Section, *The New York Times*, January 23, 1980.

MORRIS P. FIORINA

The Decline of Collective Responsibility in American Politics

THOUGH THE FOUNDING FATHERS believed in the necessity of establishing a genuinely national government, they took great pains to design one that could not lightly do things *to* its citizens; what government might do *for* its citizens was to be limited to the functions of what we know now as the “watchman state.” Thus the Founders composed the constitutional litany familiar to every schoolchild: they created a federal system, they distributed and blended powers within and across the federal levels, and they encouraged the occupants of the various positions to check and balance each other by structuring incentives so that one officeholder’s ambitions would be likely to conflict with others’. The resulting system of institutional arrangements predictably hampers efforts to undertake major initiatives and favors maintenance of the status quo.

Given the historical record faced by the Founders, their emphasis on constraining government is understandable. But we face a later historical record, one that shows two hundred years of increasing demands for government to act positively. Moreover, developments unforeseen by the Founders increasingly raise the likelihood that the uncoordinated actions of individuals and groups will inflict serious damage on the nation as a whole. The by-products of the industrial and technological revolutions impose physical risks not only on us, but on future generations as well. Resource shortages and international cartels raise the spectre of economic ruin. And the simple proliferation of special interests with their intense, particularistic demands threatens to render us politically incapable of taking actions that might either advance the state of society or prevent foreseeable deteriorations in that state. None of this is to suggest that we should forget about what government can do *to* us—the contemporary concern with the proper scope and methods of government intervention in the social and economic orders is long overdue. But the modern age demands as well that we worry about our ability to make government work *for* us. The problem is that we are gradually losing that ability, and a principal reason for this loss is the steady erosion of *responsibility* in American politics.

What do I mean by this important quality, responsibility? To say that some person or group is responsible for a state of affairs is to assert that he or they have the ability to take legitimate actions that have a major impact on that state of affairs. More colloquially, when someone is responsible, we know whom to blame. Human beings have asymmetric attitudes toward responsibility, as cap-

tured by the saying "Success has a thousand fathers, but failure is an orphan." This general observation applies very much to politicians, not surprisingly, and this creates a problem for democratic theory, because clear location of responsibility is vitally important to the operation of democratic governments. Without responsibility, citizens can only guess at who deserves their support; the act of voting loses much of its meaning. Moreover, the expectation of being held responsible provides representatives with a personal incentive to govern in their constituents' interest. As ordinary citizens we do not know the proper rate of growth of the money supply, the appropriate level of the federal deficit, the advantages of the MX over alternative missile systems, and so forth. We elect people to make those decisions. But only if those elected know they will be held accountable for the results of their decisions (or nondecisions, as the case may be), do they have a personal incentive to govern in our interest.¹

Unfortunately, the importance of responsibility in a democracy is matched by the difficulty of attaining it. In an autocracy, individual responsibility suffices; the location of power in a single individual locates responsibility in that individual as well. But individual responsibility is insufficient whenever more than one person shares governmental authority. We can hold a particular congressman individually responsible for a personal transgression such as bribetaking. We can even hold a president individually responsible for military moves where he presents Congress and the citizenry with a *fait accompli*. But on most national issues individual responsibility is difficult to assess. If one were to go to Washington, randomly accost a Democratic congressman, and berate him about a 20-percent rate of inflation, imagine the response. More than likely it would run, "Don't blame me. If 'they' had done what I've advocated for *x* years, things would be fine today." And if one were to walk over to the White House and similarly confront President Carter, he would respond as he already has, by blaming Arabs, free-spending congressmen, special interests, and, of course, us.

American institutional structure makes this kind of game-playing all too easy. In order to overcome it we must lay the credit or blame for national conditions on all those who had any hand in bringing them about: some form of *collective responsibility* is essential.

The only way collective responsibility has ever existed, and can exist given our institutions, is through the agency of the political party; in American politics, responsibility requires cohesive parties. This is an old claim to be sure, but its age does not detract from its present relevance.² In fact, the continuing decline in public esteem for the parties and continuing efforts to "reform" them out of the political process suggest that old arguments for party responsibility have not been made often enough or, at least, convincingly enough, so I will make these arguments once again in this essay.

A strong political party can generate collective responsibility by creating incentive for leaders, followers, and popular supporters to think and act in collective terms. First, by providing party leaders with the capability (e.g., control of institutional patronage, nominations, and so on) to discipline party members, genuine leadership becomes possible. Legislative output is less likely to be a least common denominator—a residue of myriad conflicting proposals—and more likely to consist of a program actually intended to solve a problem or move

the nation in a particular direction. Second, the subordination of individual officeholders to the party lessens their ability to separate themselves from party actions. Like it or not, their performance becomes identified with the performance of the collectivity to which they belong. Third, with individual candidate variation greatly reduced, voters have less incentive to support individuals and more incentive to support or oppose the party as a whole. And fourth, the circle closes as party-line voting in the electorate provides party leaders with the incentive to propose policies that will earn the support of a national majority, and party back-benchers with the personal incentive to cooperate with leaders in the attempt to compile a good record for the party as a whole.

In the American context, strong parties have traditionally clarified politics in two ways. First, they allow citizens to assess responsibility easily, at least when the government is unified, which it more often was in earlier eras when party meant more than it does today.³ Citizens need only evaluate the social, economic, and international conditions they observe and make a simple decision for or against change. They do not need to decide whether the energy, inflation, urban, and defense policies advocated by their congressman would be superior to those advocated by Carter—were any of them to be enacted!

The second way in which strong parties clarify American politics follows from the first. When citizens assess responsibility on the party as a whole, party members have personal incentives to see the party evaluated favorably. They have little to gain from gutting their president's program one day and attacking him for lack of leadership the next, since they share in the president's fate when voters do not differentiate within the party. Put simply, party responsibility provides party members with a personal stake in their collective performance.

Admittedly, party responsibility is a blunt instrument. The objection immediately arises that party responsibility condemns junior Democratic representatives to suffer electorally for an inflation they could do little to affect. An unhappy situation, true, but unless we accept it, Congress as a whole escapes electoral retribution for an inflation they *could* have done something to affect. Responsibility requires acceptance of both conditions. The choice is between a blunt instrument or none at all.

Of course, the United States is not Great Britain. We have neither the institutions nor the traditions to support a British brand of responsible party government, and I do not see either the possibility or the necessity for such a system in America. In the past the United States has enjoyed eras in which party was a much stronger force than today. And until recently—a generation, roughly—parties have provided an “adequate” degree of collective responsibility. They have done so by connecting the electoral fates of party members, via presidential coattails, for example, and by transforming elections into referenda on party performance, as with congressional off-year elections.

In earlier times, when citizens voted for the party, not the person, parties had incentives to nominate good candidates, because poor ones could have harmful fallout on the ticket as a whole.⁴ In particular, the existence of presidential coattails (positive and negative) provided an inducement to avoid the nomination of narrowly based candidates, no matter how committed their supporters. And, once in office, the existence of party voting in the electorate provided party members with the incentive to compile a good *party* record. In

particular, the tendency of national midterm elections to serve as referenda on the performance of the president provided a clear inducement for congressmen to do what they could to see that their president was perceived as a solid performer. By stimulating electoral phenomena such as coattail effects and midterm referenda, party transformed some degree of personal ambition into concern with collective performance.

In the contemporary period, however, even the preceding tendencies toward collective responsibility have largely dissipated. As background for a discussion of this contemporary weakening of collective responsibility and its deleterious consequences, let us briefly review the evidence for the decline of party in America.

The Continuing Decline of Party in the United States

Party is a simple term that covers a multitude of complicated organizations and processes. It manifests itself most concretely as the set of party organizations that exist principally at the state and local levels. It manifests itself most elusively as a psychological presence in the mind of the citizen. Somewhere in between, and partly a function of the first two, is the manifestation of party as a force in government. The discussion in this section will hold to this traditional schema, though it is clear that the three aspects of party have important interconnections.

Party Organizations

In the United States, party organization has traditionally meant state and local party organization. The national party generally has been a loose confederacy of subnational units that swings into action for a brief period every four years. This characterization remains true today, despite the somewhat greater influence and augmented functions of the national organizations.⁵ Though such things are difficult to measure precisely, there is general agreement that the formal party organizations have undergone a secular decline since their peak at the end of the nineteenth century. The prototype of the old-style organization was the urban machine, a form approximated today only in Chicago.

Several long-term trends have served to undercut old-style party organizations. The patronage system has been steadily chopped back since passage of the Civil Service Act of 1883. The social welfare functions of the parties have passed to the government as the modern welfare state developed. And, less concretely, the entire ethos of the old-style party organization is increasingly at odds with modern ideas of government based on rational expertise. These long-term trends spawned specific attacks on the old party organizations. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the Populists, Progressives, and assorted other reformers fought electoral corruption with the Australian Ballot and personal registration systems. They attempted to break the hold of the party bosses over nominations by mandating the direct primary. They attacked the urban machines with drives for nonpartisan at-large elections and nonpartisan city managers. None of these reforms destroyed the parties; they managed

to live with the reforms better than most reformers had hoped. But the reforms reflected changing popular attitudes toward the parties and accelerated the secular decline in the influence of the party organizations.

The New Deal period temporarily arrested the deterioration of the party organizations, at least on the Democratic side. Unified party control under a "political" president provided favorable conditions for the state and local organizations.⁶ But following the heyday of the New Deal (and ironically, in part, because of government assumption of subnational parties' functions) the decline continued.

In the 1970s two series of reforms further weakened the influence of organized parties in American national politics. The first was a series of legal changes deliberately intended to lessen organized party influence in the presidential nominating process. In the Democratic party, "New Politics" activists captured the national party apparatus and imposed a series of rules changes designed to "open up" the politics of presidential nominations. The Republican party—long more amateur and open than the Democratic party—adopted weaker versions of the Democratic rules changes. In addition, modifications of state electoral laws to conform to the Democratic rules changes (enforced by the federal courts) stimulated Republican rules changes as well. Table 1 shows that the presidential nominating process has indeed been opened up. In little more than a decade after the disastrous 1968 Democratic conclave, the number of primary states has more than doubled, and the number of delegates chosen in primaries has increased from little more than a third to three-quarters. Moreover, the remaining delegates emerge from caucuses far more open to mass citizen participation, and the delegates themselves are more likely to be amateurs, than previously.⁷ For example, in the four conventions from 1956 to 1968 more than 70 percent of the Democratic party's senators, 40 percent of their representatives, and 80 percent of their governors attended. In 1976 the figures were 18 percent, 15 percent, and 47 percent, respectively.⁸ Today's youth can observe the back-room maneuvers of party bosses and favorite sons only by watching *The Best Man* on late night television.

Table 1. Recent Changes in Presidential Nomination Process

	Number of States Holding Primaries	Percentages of Delegates Selected in Primaries	
		Democratic	Republican
1968	17	38	34
1972	23	61	53
1976	30	73	68
1980	36	76	76

Source: 1968-1976 figures from Austin Ranney, "The Political Parties: Reform and Decline," in *The New American Political System*, Anthony King (ed.) (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1978), Table 6-1. Figures for 1980 are from *National Journal*, October 20, 1979: 1738-9.

A second series of 1970s reforms lessened the role of formal party organizations in the conduct of political campaigns. These are financing regulations growing out of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 as amended in 1974 and 1976. In this case the reforms were aimed at cleaning up corruption in the financing of campaigns; their effects on the parties were a by-product, though many individuals accurately predicted its nature. Serious presidential candidates are now publicly financed. Though the law permits the national party to spend two cents per eligible voter on behalf of the nominee, it also obliges the candidate to set up a finance committee separate from the national party. Between this legally mandated separation and fear of violating spending limits or accounting regulations, for example, the law has the effect of encouraging the candidate to keep his party at arm's length.⁹

At present only presidential candidates enjoy public financing, but a series of new limits on contributions and expenditures affects other national races. Prior to the implementation of the new law, data on congressional campaign financing were highly unreliable, but consider some of the trends that have emerged in the short time the law has been in effect. Table 2 shows the diminished role of the parties in the financing of congressional races. In House races, the decline in the party proportion of funding has been made up by the generosity of political action committees (also stimulated by the new law). In the Senate, wealthy candidates appear to have picked up the slack left by the diminished party role. The party funding contribution in congressional races has declined not only as a proportion of the total, but also in absolute dollars, and considerably in inflation-adjusted dollars. The limits in the new law restrict a House candidate to no more than \$15,000 in funding from each of the national and relevant state parties (the average campaign expenditure of an incumbent in 1978 was about \$121,000; of a challenger, about \$54,000). A candidate for the Senate is permitted to receive a maximum of \$17,500 from his senatorial campaign committee, plus two cents per eligible voter from the national committee

Table 2. Recent Sources of Congressional Campaign Contributions (in Percentages)

	House			
	Individual	PACs	Parties	Personal
1972	59	14	17	NA
1978	57	25	7	11
	Senate			
	Individual	PACs	Parties	Personal
1972	67	12	14	1
1978	70	13	6	11

Source: Michael Malbin, "Of Mountains and Molehills: PACs, Campaigns, and Public Policy," in Malbin (ed.), *Parties, Interest Groups, and Campaign Finance Laws* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1980), Table 1.

and a like amount from the relevant state committee (twenty-one senatorial candidates spent over \$1 million in 1978).

There is no detailed work on the precise effects of the contribution limits, but it appears doubtful that they are binding. If the national party were to contribute \$15,000 to each of its congressional candidates, and a flat \$17,500 to each of its senatorial candidates, that would be more than \$8 million. *All* levels of the parties contributed only \$10.5 million of the \$157 million spent in 1978 congressional races.

Probably more constraining than limits on what the parties can contribute to the candidates are limits on what citizens and groups can contribute to the parties. Under current law, individual contributors may give \$1,000 per election to a candidate (primary, runoff, general election), \$5,000 per year to a political action committee, and \$20,000 per year to a party. From the standpoint of the law, each of the two great national parties is the equivalent of four PACs. The PACs themselves are limited to a \$15,000 per year contribution to the national party. Thus financial angels are severely restricted. They must spread contributions around to individual candidates, each of whom is likely to regard the contribution as an expression of personal worthiness and, if anything, as less reason than ever to think in terms of the party.

The ultimate results of such reforms are easy to predict. A lesser party role in the nominating and financing of candidates encourages candidates to organize and conduct independent campaigns, which further weakens the role of parties. Of course, party is not the entire story in this regard. Other modern day changes contribute to the diminished party role in campaign politics. For one thing, party foot soldiers are no longer so important, given the existence of a large leisured middle class that participates out of duty or enjoyment, but that participates on behalf of particular candidates and issues rather than parties. Similarly, contemporary campaigns rely heavily on survey research, the mass media, and modern advertising methods—all provided by independent consultants outside the formal party apparatus. Although these developments are not directly related to the contemporary reforms, their effect is the same: the diminution of the role of parties in conducting political campaigns. And if parties do not grant nominations, fund their choices, and work for them, why should those choices feel any commitment to their party?

Party in the Electorate

In the citizenry at large, party takes the form of a psychological attachment. The typical American traditionally has been likely to identify with one or the other of the two major parties. Such identifications are transmitted across generations to some degree, and within the individual they tend to be fairly stable.¹⁰ But there is mounting evidence that the basis of identification lies in the individual's experiences (direct and vicarious, through family and social groups) with the parties in the past.¹¹ Our current party system, of course, is based on the dislocations of the Depression period and the New Deal attempts to alleviate them. Though only a small proportion of those who experienced the Depression directly are active voters today, the general outlines of citizen party identifications much resemble those established at that time.

Again, there is reason to believe that the extent of citizen attachments to parties has undergone a long-term decline from a late nineteenth century high.¹² And again, the New Deal appears to have been a period during which the decline was arrested, even temporarily reversed. But again, the decline of party has reasserted itself in the 1970s.

Since 1952 the Center for Political Studies at the University of Michigan has conducted regular national election surveys. The data elicited in such studies give us a graphic picture of the state of party in the electorate (Table 3). As the 1960s wore on, the heretofore stable distribution of citizen party identifications began to change in the general direction of weakened attachments to the parties. Between 1960 and 1976, independents, broadly defined, increased from less than a quarter to more than a third of the voting-age population. Strong identifiers declined from slightly more than a third to about a quarter of the population.

As the strength and extent of citizen attachments to the parties declined, the influence of party on the voting decisions of the citizenry similarly declined. The percentage of the voting-age population that reports consistent support of the same party's presidential candidate dropped from more than two-thirds in 1952 to less than half in 1976. As Table 4 shows, the percentage of voters who report a congressional vote consistent with their party identification has declined from over 80 percent in the late 1950s to under 70 percent today. And as Table 5 shows, ticket-splitting, both at the national and subnational levels, has probably doubled since the time of the first Eisenhower election.

Indisputably, party in the electorate has declined in recent years. Why? To some extent the electoral decline results from the organizational decline. Few party organizations any longer have the tangible incentives to turn out the faithful and assure their loyalty. Candidates run independent campaigns and deemphasize their partisan ties whenever they see any short-term electoral gain in doing so. If party is increasingly less important in the nomination and election of candidates, it is not surprising that such diminished importance is reflected in the attitudes and behavior of the voter.

Certain long-term sociological and technological trends also appear to work against party in the electorate. The population is younger, and younger citizens

Table 3. Subjective Party Identification, 1960-1976 (in Percentages)

Party ID	1960	1964	1968	1972	1976
Strong Democrat	21	27	20	15	15
Weak Democrat	25	25	25	26	25
Independent Democrat	8	8	9	10	12
Independent	8	8	11	13	14
Independent Republican	7	6	9	11	10
Weak Republican	13	13	14	13	14
Strong Republican	14	11	10	10	9

Source: National Election Studies made available by the InterUniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research, University of Michigan.

Table 4. Party-Line Votes in House Elections

Year	1956	1958	1960	1962	1964	1966
Percentage	82	84	80	83	79	76
Year	1968	1970	1972	1974	1976	1978
Percentage	74	76	73	74	72	69

Source: National Election Studies made available by The InterUniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research, University of Michigan.

traditionally are less attached to the parties than their elders. The population is more highly educated; fewer voters need some means of simplifying the choices they face in the political arena, and party, of course, has been the principal means of simplification. And the media revolution has vastly expanded the amount of information easily available to the citizenry. Candidates would have little incentive to operate campaigns independent of the parties if there were no means to apprise the citizenry of their independence. The media provide the means.

Finally, our present party system is an old one. For increasing numbers of citizens, party attachments based on the Great Depression seem lacking in relevance to the problems of the late twentieth century. Beginning with the racial issue in the 1960s, proceeding to the social issue of the 1970s, and to the energy, environment, and inflation issues of today, the parties have been rent by internal dissension. Sometimes they failed to take stands, at other times they took the wrong ones from the standpoint of the rank and file, and at most times they have failed to solve the new problems in any genuine sense. Since 1965 the parties have done little or nothing to earn the loyalties of modern Americans.

Party in Government

If the organizational capabilities of the parties have weakened, and their psychological ties to the voters have loosened, one would expect predictable consequences for the party in government. In particular, one would expect to see an increasing degree of split party control within and across the levels of American government. The evidence on this point is overwhelming.

At the state level, twenty-seven of the fifty governments were under divided party control after the 1978 election. In seventeen states a governor of one party opposed a legislature controlled by the other, and in ten others a bicameral legislature was split between the parties. By way of contrast, twenty years ago the number of states with divided party control was sixteen.

At the federal level the trend is similar. In 1953 only twelve states sent a senator of each party to Washington. The number increased to sixteen by 1961, to twenty-one by 1972, and stands at twenty-seven today. Of course, the senators in each state are elected at different times. But the same patterns emerge when we examine simultaneous elections. There is an increasing tendency for congressional districts to support a congressman of one party and the presiden-

Table 5. Trends in Ticket-Splitting, 1952-1976 (in Percentages)

	President/House	State/Local
1952	12	34
1956	16	42
1960	14	46
1964	15	42
1968	18	48
1972	30	54
1976	25	—

Source: National Election Studies made available by The InterUniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research, University of Michigan.

tial candidate of the other (Table 6). At the turn of the century it was extremely rare for a congressional district to report a split result. But since that time the trend has been steadily upward. We may well be heading for a record in 1980 as a vulnerable Democratic president runs with 250-odd not-so-vulnerable Democratic congressmen.

Seemingly unsatisfied with the increasing tendencies of the voters to engage in ticket-splitting, we have added to the split of party in government by changing electoral rules in a manner that lessens the impact of national forces. For example, in 1920 thirty-five states elected their legislators, governors, and other state officials in presidential election years. In 1944 thirty-two states still did so. But in the past generation the trend has been toward isolation of state elections from national currents: as of 1970 only twenty states still held their elections concurrently with the national ones.¹³ This legal separation of the state and national electoral arenas helps to separate the electoral fates of party officeholders at different levels of government, and thereby lessens their common interest in a good party record.

The increased fragmentation of the party in government makes it more difficult for government officeholders to work together than in times past (not that it has ever been terribly easy). Voters meanwhile have a more difficult time attrib-

Table 6. Split Results, Congress and President

Year	1900	1908	1916	1924	1932	1940
Percentage of Districts	3	7	11	12	14	15
Year	1948	1956	1964	1972	1980	
Percentage of Districts	23	30	33	42	?	

Source: The 1900-1964 figures are from Walter Dean Burham, *Critical Elections and the Mainspring of American Politics* (New York: Norton, 1970), p. 109. The 1972 figures are from *Congressional Quarterly's* compilation of official election returns.

uting responsibility for government performance, and this only further fragments party control. The result is lessened collective responsibility in the system.

In recent years it has become a commonplace to bemoan the decline of party in government. National commentators nostalgically contrast the Senate under Lyndon Johnson with that under Robert Byrd. They deplore the cowardice and paralysis of a House of Representatives, supposedly controlled by a two-thirds Democratic majority under the most activist, partisan speaker since Sam Rayburn. And, of course, there are the unfavorable comparisons of Jimmy Carter to previous presidents—not only FDR and LBJ, but even Kennedy. Such observations may be descriptively accurate, but they are not very illuminating. It is not enough to call for more inspiring presidential leadership and to demand that the majority party in Congress show more readiness to bite the bullet. Our present national problems should be recognized as the outgrowths of the increasing separation of the presidential and congressional electoral arenas.

By now it is widely understood that senatorial races are in a class by themselves. The visibility of the office attracts the attention of the media as well as that of organized interest groups. Celebrities and plutocrats find the office attractive. Thus massive media campaigns and the politics of personality increasingly affect these races. Senate elections now are most notable for their idiosyncrasy, and consequentially for their growing volatility; correspondingly, such general forces as the president and the party are less influential in senatorial voting today than previously.

What is less often recognized is that House elections have grown increasingly idiosyncratic as well. I have already discussed the declining importance of party identification in House voting and the increasing number of split results at the district level. These trends are both cause and consequence of incumbent efforts to insulate themselves from the electoral effects of national conditions. Figure 1 shows the distribution of the vote garnered by the Democratic candidate in incumbent-contested districts in 1948 and 1972.¹⁴ Evidently, a massive change took place in the past generation. In 1948 most congressional districts were clustered around the 50-percent mark (an even split between the parties); most districts now are clustered away from the point of equal division. Two obvious questions arise: Why has the change occurred, and does it matter?

Taking the second question first, Figure 1 suggests a bleak future for such electoral phenomena as presidential coattails and midterm referenda on presidential performance. Consider a swing of 5 percent in the congressional vote owing to a particularly attractive (or repulsive) presidential candidate or an especially poor performance by a president. In the world represented by the 1948 diagram, such a swing has major consequences: it shifts a large proportion of districts across the 50-percent mark. The shift provides a new president with a "mandate" in an on-year election and constitutes a strong "message" to the president in an off-year election. In the world represented by the 1972 diagram, however, the hypothesized 5-percent shift has little effect: few seats are close enough to the tipping point to shift parties under the hypothesized swing. The president's victory is termed a "personal" victory by the media, or the midterm result is interpreted as a reflection of personal and local concerns rather than national ones.

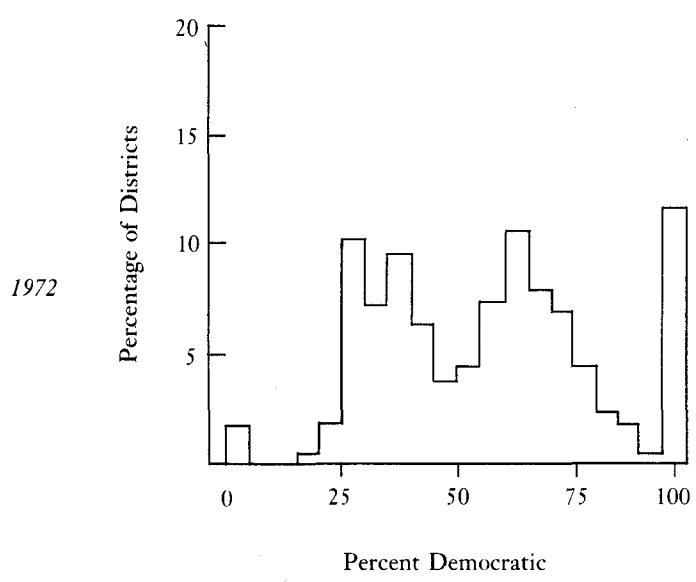
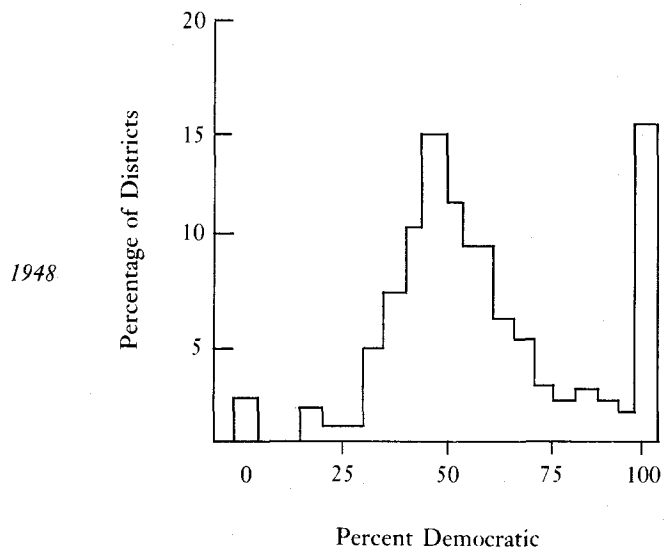


Figure 1. Congressional Vote in Districts with Incumbents Running

Why has the distribution of the congressional voting results changed over time? Elsewhere I have argued that much of the transformation results from a temporal change in the basis of congressional voting.¹⁵ We have seen that party influence in House voting has lessened. And, judging by the number of Democrats successfully hanging onto traditional Republican districts, programmatic and ideological influences on House voting probably have declined as well. What has taken up the slack left by the weakening of the traditional determinants of congressional voting? It appears that a variety of personal and local influences now play a major role in citizen evaluations of their representatives.¹⁶ Along with the expansion of the federal presence in American life, the traditional role of the congressman as an all-purpose ombudsman has greatly expanded. Tens of millions of citizens now are directly affected by federal decisions. Myriad programs provide opportunities to profit from government largesse, and myriad regulations impose costs and/or constraints on citizen activities. And, whether seeking to gain profit or avoid costs, citizens seek the aid of their congressmen. When a court imposes a desegregation plan on an urban school board, the congressional offices immediately are contacted for aid in safeguarding existing sources of funding and in determining eligibility for new ones. When a major employer announces plans to quit an area, the congressional offices immediately are contacted to explore possibilities for using federal programs to persuade the employer to reconsider. Contractors appreciate a good congressional word with DoD procurement officers. Local artistic groups cannot survive without NEA funding. And, of course, there are the major individual programs such as social security and veterans' benefits that create a steady demand for congressional information and aid services. Such activities are nonpartisan, nonideological, and, most important, noncontroversial. Moreover, the contribution of the congressman in the realm of district service appears considerably greater than the impact of his or her single vote on major national issues. Constituents respond rationally to this modern state of affairs by weighing non-programmatic constituency service heavily when casting their congressional votes. And this emphasis on the part of constituents provides the means for incumbents to solidify their hold on the office. Even if elected by a narrow margin, diligent service activities enable a congressman to neutralize or even convert a portion of those who would otherwise oppose him on policy or ideological grounds. Emphasis on local, nonpartisan factors in congressional voting enables the modern congressman to withstand national swings, whereas yesterday's uninsulated congressmen were more dependent on preventing the occurrence of the swings.

Actually, the insulation of the modern congressman from national forces is even more complete than the preceding discussion suggests. Not only are few representatives so vulnerable that a reaction to a presidential candidate or his performance would turn them out of office, but such reactions themselves are less likely to find a reflection in the congressional voting. Several years ago Professor Edward Tufte formulated an elegant statistical model that predicts the magnitude of the in-party's losses in midterm elections as a function of two variables, the popularity of the incumbent president and the state of the national economy as measured by changes in real income.¹⁷ For most of the post-World

War II period the model predicts quite accurately. But in recent years the predictions have begun to go awry; specifically, in 1974 and 1978 the model significantly overpredicts the losses of the in-party.¹⁸ The reason is quite apparent. As congressmen increasingly build personal organizations (largely with taxpayer-provided offices, staff, and communications resources) and base their campaigns on local issues and their personal record of service to the district, national conditions and the performance of the party leader have less and less of an impact on House races. In fact, analysis of the 1978 Center for Political Studies Congressional Election Study reveals that evaluations of President Carter's performance had no effect on the electoral fortunes of Democratic incumbents, and citizen evaluations of government's handling of the national economy had only the barest trace of an impact.¹⁹

The effects of the insulation of congressional incumbents have begun to show up in a systematic way in the governmental arena. Table 7 presents data on presidential success and presidential support in Congress for the first two years of the administrations of our last five elected presidents. As is evident, Carter ('77-78) was less successful than earlier presidents who enjoyed a Congress controlled by their own party; he was only as successful as Nixon, who faced an opposition Congress. Moreover, in the House, Carter has done relatively poorly in gaining the support of his own party. It is noteworthy that John F. Kennedy ('61-62) earned a significantly higher level of support from a congressional party that was nearly half Southern, whereas Carter enjoyed a majority in which the regional split was much less severe.²⁰

Of course, it is possible to discount the preceding argument as an unjustified generalization of a unique situation—a particularly inept president, a Congress full of prima donnas still flexing their post-Watergate muscles, and so on. But I think not. The withering away of the party organizations and the weakening of party in the electorate have begun to show up as disarray in the party in government. As the electoral fates of congressmen and the president have diverged, their incentives to cooperate have diverged as well. Congressmen have little personal incentive to bear any risk in their president's behalf, since they no longer expect to gain much from his successes or suffer much from his failures. Only those who personally agree with the president's program and/or those who

Table 7. Recent Trends in Congressional Support of the Executive (in Percentages)

Congress	Year	Presidential Success	Presidential Support within His Party	
			House	Senate
83rd	'53-54	83	72	72
87th	'61-62	83	73	64
89th	'65-66	87	69	61
91st	'69-70	76	62	63
95th	'77-78	77	61	67

Source: *Congressional Quarterly Almanacs*

find that program well suited for their particular district support the president. And there are not enough of these to construct the coalitions necessary for action on the major issues now facing the country. By holding only the president responsible for national conditions, the electorate enables officialdom as a whole to escape responsibility. This situation lies at the root of many of the problems that now plague American public life.

Some Consequences of the Decline of Collective Responsibility

The weakening of party has contributed directly to the severity of several of the important problems the nation faces. For some of these, such as the government's inability to deal with inflation and energy, the connections are obvious. But for other problems, such as the growing importance of single-issue politics and the growing alienation of the American citizenry, the connections are more subtle.

Immobilism

As the electoral interdependence of the party in government declines, its ability to act also declines. If responsibility can be shifted to another level or to another officeholder, there is less incentive to stick one's own neck out in an attempt to solve a given problem. Leadership becomes more difficult, the ever-present bias toward the short-term solution becomes more pronounced, and the possibility of solving any given problem lessens.

Consider the two critical problems facing the country today, energy and inflation. Major energy problems were forecast years ago, the 1973 embargo underlined the dangers, and yet what passes for our national energy policy is still only a weak set of jerry-built compromises achieved at the expense of years of political infighting. The related inflation problem has festered for more than a decade, and our current president is on his fourth anti-inflation plan, a set of proposals widely regarded as yet another instance of too little, too late. The failures of policy-making in these areas are easy to identify and explain. A potential problem is identified, and actions that might head it off are proposed "for discussion." But the problem lies in the future, while the solutions impose costs in the present. So politicians dismiss the solutions as unfeasible and act as though the problem will go away. When it doesn't, popular concern increases. The president, in particular, feels compelled to act—he will be held responsible, both at election time and in the judgment of history. But congressmen expect to bear much less responsibility; moreover, the representatives face an election in less than two years, whereas the president can wait at least four (longer for the lame duck) for the results of his policy to become evident. Congressmen, logically enough, rebel. They denounce every proposed initiative as unfair, which simply means that it imposes costs on their constituents, whereas they prefer the costs to fall on everyone else's constituents. At first, no policy will be adopted; later, as pressure builds, Congress adopts a weak and ineffectual policy for symbolic purposes. Then, as the problem continues to worsen, congressmen join with the press and the public and attack the president for failures of leadership.

The preceding scenario is simplified, to be sure, but largely accurate, and in my opinion, rather disgusting. What makes it possible is the electoral fragmentation produced by the decline of party. Members of Congress are aware that national problems arising from inaction will have little political impact on them, and that the president's failures in dealing with those problems will have similarly little impact. Responsibility for inflation and energy problems? Don't look at congressmen.

In 1958 the Fourth Republic of France collapsed after years of immobilism. The features of congressional policy-making just discussed were carried to their logical extremes in that Parliamentary regime. According to contemporary observers, the basic principle of the French Deputy was to avoid responsibility.²¹ To achieve that goal the deputies followed subsidiary rules, the most important of which was delay. Action would take place only when crisis removed any possible alternative to action (and most of the alternative actions as well). A slogan of the time was "Those who crawl do not fall."

No one seriously believes that the American constitutional order is in danger of collapse (and certainly we have no de Gaulle waiting in the wings). But political inability to take actions that entail short-run costs ordinarily will result in much higher costs in the long run—we cannot continually depend on the technological fix. So the present American immobilism cannot be dismissed lightly. The sad thing is that the American people appear to understand the depth of our present problems and, at least in principle, appear prepared to sacrifice in furtherance of the long-run good. But they will not have an opportunity to choose between two or more such long-term plans. Although both parties promise tough, equitable policies, in the present state of our politics, neither can deliver.

Single-Issue Politics

In recent years both political analysts and politicians have decried the increased importance of single-issue groups in American politics. Some in fact would claim that the present immobilism in our politics owes more to the rise of single-issue groups than to the decline of party. A little thought, however, should reveal that the two trends are connected. Is single-issue politics a recent phenomenon? The contention is doubtful; such groups have always been active participants in American politics. The gun lobby already was a classic example at the time of President Kennedy's assassination. And however impressive the antiabortionists appear today, remember the temperance movement, which succeeded in getting its constitutional amendment. American history contains numerous forerunners of today's groups, from anti-Masons to abolitionists to the Klan—singularity of purpose is by no means a modern phenomenon. Why, then, do we hear all the contemporary hoopla about single-issue groups? Probably because politicians fear them now more than before and thus allow them to play a larger role in our politics. Why should this be so? Simply because the parties are too weak to protect their members and thus to contain single-issue politics.

In earlier times single-issue groups were under greater pressures to reach accommodations with the parties. After all, the parties nominated candidates,

financed candidates, worked for candidates, and, perhaps most important, party voting protected candidates. When a contemporary single-issue group threatens to "get" an officeholder, the threat must be taken seriously. The group can go into his district, recruit a primary or general election challenger, or both, and bankroll that candidate. Even if the sentiment espoused by the group is not the majority sentiment of the district, few officeholders relish the thought of a strong, well-financed opponent. Things were different when strong parties existed. Party leaders controlled the nomination process and would fight to maintain that control. An outside challenge would merely serve to galvanize the party into action to protect its prerogatives. Only if a single-issue group represented the dominant sentiment in a given area could it count on controlling the party organization itself, and thereby electoral politics in that area.

Not only did the party organization have greater ability to resist single-issue pressures at the electoral level, but the party in government had greater ability to control the agenda, and thereby contain single-issue pressures at the policy-making level. Today we seem condemned to go through an annual agony over federal abortion funding. There is little doubt that politicians on both sides would prefer to reach some reasonable compromise at the committee level and settle the issue. But in today's decentralized Congress there is no way to put the lid on. In contrast, historians tell us that in the late nineteenth century a large portion of the Republican constituency was far less interested in the tariff and other questions of national economic development than in whether German immigrants should be permitted to teach their native language in their local schools, and whether Catholics and "liturgical Protestants" should be permitted to consume alcohol.²² Interestingly, however, the national agenda of the period is devoid of such issues. And when they do show up on the state level, the exceptions prove the rule; they produce party splits and striking defeats for the party that allowed them to surface.²³

One can cite more recent examples as well. Prior to 1970 popular commentators frequently criticized the autocratic antimajoritarian behavior of congressional committee chairmen in general, and of the entire Rules Committee in particular. It is certainly true that the seniority leadership killed many bills the rank and file might have passed if left to their own devices. But congressional scholars were always aware as well that the seniority leadership buried many bills that the rank and file wanted buried but lacked the political courage to bury themselves. In 1961, for example, the House Rules Committee was roundly condemned for killing a major federal aid to education bill over the question of extension of that aid to parochial schools. Contemporary accounts, however, suggest that congressmen regarded the action of the Rules Committee as a public service.²⁴ Of course, control of the agenda is a double-edged sword (a point we return to below), but today commentators on single-issue groups clearly are concerned with too little control rather than too much.

In sum, a strong party that is held accountable for the government of a nation-state has both the ability and the incentive to contain particularistic pressures. It controls nominations, elections, and the agenda, and it collectively realizes that small minorities are small minorities no matter how intense they are. But as the parties decline they lose control over nominations and campaigns, they lose the loyalty of the voters, and they lose control of the agenda.

Party officeholders cease to be held collectively accountable for party performance, but they become individually exposed to the political pressure of myriad interest groups. The decline of party permits interest groups to wield greater influence, their success encourages the formation of still more interest groups, politics becomes increasingly fragmented, and collective responsibility becomes still more elusive.

Popular Alienation from Government

For at least a decade political analysts have pondered the significance of survey data indicative of a steady increase in the alienation of the American public from the political process. Table 8 presents some representative data: two-thirds of the American public feel the government is run for the benefit of big interests rather than for the people as a whole, three-quarters believe that government officials waste a lot of tax money, and half flatly agree with the statement that government officials are basically incompetent. The American public is in a nasty mood, a cynical, distrusting, and resentful mood. The question is, Why?

Specific events and personalities clearly have some effect: we see pronounced "Watergate effects" between 1972 and 1976. But the trends clearly began much earlier. Indeed, the first political science studies analyzing the trends were based on data no later than 1972.²⁵ At the other extreme it also appears that the American data are only the strongest manifestation of a pattern evident in many democracies, perhaps for reasons common to all countries in the present era, perhaps not. I do think it probable, however, that the trends thus far discussed bear some relation to the popular mood in the United States.

If the same national problems not only persist but worsen while ever-greater amounts of revenue are directed at them, why shouldn't the typical citizen conclude that most of the money must be wasted by incompetent officials? If narrowly based interest groups increasingly affect our politics, why shouldn't citizens increasingly conclude that the interests run the government? For fifteen years the citizenry has listened to a steady stream of promises but has seen very little in the way of follow-through. An increasing proportion of the electorate

Table 8. Recent Trends in Political Alienation and Distrust (in Percentages)

	Government Run for Few Big Interests	Government Officials Waste "A Lot"	Government Officials Don't Know What They're Doing
1964	29	46	27
1968	39	57	36
1972	45	56	34
1976	66	74	49
1978	68	77	50

Source: National Election Studies made available by The InterUniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research, University of Michigan.

does not believe that elections make a difference, a fact that largely explains the much-discussed post-1960 decline in voting turnout.²⁶

Continued public disillusionment with the political process poses several real dangers. For one thing, disillusionment begets further disillusionment. Leadership becomes more difficult if citizens do not trust their leaders and will not give them the benefit of a doubt. Policy failure becomes more likely if citizens expect the policy to fail. Waste increases and government competence decreases as citizen disrespect for politics encourages a lesser breed of person to make careers in government. And "government by a few big interests" becomes more than a cliché if citizens increasingly decide the cliché is true and cease participating for that reason.

Finally, there is the real danger that continued disappointment with particular government officials ultimately metamorphoses into disillusionment with government per se. Increasing numbers of citizens believe that government is not simply overextended but perhaps incapable of any further bettering of the world. Yes, government is overextended, inefficiency is pervasive, and ineffectiveness is all too common. But government is one of the few instruments of collective action we have, and even those committed to selective pruning of government programs cannot blithely allow the concept of an activist government to fall into disrepute.

The concept of democracy does not submit to precise definition, a claim supported by the existence of numerous nonidentical definitions. To most people democracy embodies a number of valued qualities. Unfortunately, there is no reason to believe that all such valued qualities are mutually compatible. At the least, maximizing the attainment of one quality may require accepting middling levels of another.

Recent American political thought has emphasized government *of* the people and *by* the people. Attempts have been made to insure that all preferences receive a hearing, especially through direct expression of those preferences, but if not, at least through faithful representation. Citizen *participation* is the reigning value, and arrangements that foster widespread participation are much in favor.

Of late, however, some political commentators have begun to wonder whether contemporary thought places sufficient emphasis on government *for* the people. In stressing participation have we lost sight of *accountability*? Surely, we should be as concerned with what government produces as with how many participate. What good is participation if the citizenry is unable to determine who merits their support?²⁷

Participation and responsibility are not logically incompatible, but there is a degree of tension between the two, and the quest for either may be carried to extremes. Participation maximizers find themselves involved with quotas and virtual representation schemes, while responsibility maximizers can find themselves with a closed shop under boss rule.²⁸ Moreover, both qualities can weaken the democracy they supposedly underpin. Unfettered participation produces Hyde Amendments and immobilism. Responsible parties can use agenda power to thwart democratic decision—for more than a century the Democratic party

used what control it had to suppress the racial issue. Neither participation nor responsibility should be pursued at the expense of all other values, but that is what has happened with participation over the course of the past two decades, and we now reap the consequences in our politics.

In 1970 journalist David Broder wrote:

what we have is a society in which discontent, disbelief, cynicism and political inertia characterize the public mood; a country whose economy suffers from severe dislocations, whose currency is endangered, where unemployment and inflation coexist, where increasing numbers of people and even giant enterprises live on the public dole; a country whose two races continue to withdraw from each other in growing physical and social isolation; a country whose major public institutions command steadily less allegiance from its citizens; whose education, transportation, law enforcement, health and sanitation systems fall far short of filling their functions; a country whose largest city is close to being ungovernable and uninhabitable; and a country still far from reconciling its international responsibilities with its unmet domestic needs.

We are in trouble.²⁹

Broder is not a Cassandra, and he was writing before FECA, before the OPEC embargo, before Watergate, and before Jimmy Carter. If he was correct that we were in trouble then, what about now?

The depressing thing is that no rays of light shine through the dark clouds. The trends that underlie the decline of parties continue unabated, and the kinds of structural reforms that might override those trends are too sweeping and/or outlandish to stand any chance of adoption.³⁰ Through a complex mixture of accident and intention we have constructed for ourselves a system that articulates interests superbly but aggregates them poorly. We hold our politicians individually accountable for the proposals they advocate, but less so for the adoption of those proposals, and not at all for overseeing the implementation of those proposals and the evaluation of their results. In contemporary America officials do not govern, they merely posture.

REFERENCES

My thinking on the matters discussed in this essay has benefitted from the critical commentary of Lawrence Joseph and Robert Salisbury.

¹This may sound cynical, but it is a standard assumption in American democratic theory. Certainly the Founders believed that the government should not depend on the nobility of heart of officialdom in order to operate properly.

²This argument was expounded at the turn of the century by writers such as Woodrow Wilson and A. Lawrence Lowell. It enjoyed a resurgence at mid-century in the thinking of scholars such as E. E. Schattschneider. For a thorough exegesis of the party responsibility argument, see Austin Ranney, *The Doctrine of Responsible Party Government* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1962).

³During the postwar period the national government has experienced divided party control about half the time. In the preceding half century there were only six years of divided control.

⁴At this point skeptics invariably ask, "What about Warren G. Harding?" The statement in the text is meant to express a tendency. Certainly, in the first sixty years of this century we did not see a string of candidates comparable to the products of the amateur politics of the past fourteen years (Goldwater, McGovern, Carter, Reagan).

⁵See Gerald Pomper, "The Decline of the Party in American Elections," *Political Science Quarterly*, 92 (1977): 21-41; John Kessel, *Presidential Campaign Politics: Coalition Strategies and Citizen Responses* (Homewood, Illinois: Dorsey, 1980), ch. 10; Austin Ranney, "The Political Parties: Reform and Decline," in Anthony King (ed.), *The New American Political System* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1978), pp. 213-47. Both Kessel and Pomper have discussed the increased

importance of the national party organizations in terms of maintenance of continuing operations, imposition of national rules and standards on the local parties, and so on. I believe with Ranney, however, that, considering all levels of the party together, there has been a decline in organizational strength even as the national party apparatuses have grown more influential.

⁶Though federal employment increased considerably during the New Deal era, the proportion covered by civil service declined. Thus the erosion of the patronage system was temporarily halted. In addition, scholars have documented the political basis of New Deal spending and program decisions. See Gavin Wright, "The Political Economy of New Deal Spending: An Econometric Analysis," *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 56 (1974): 30-38.

⁷Jeanne Kirkpatrick, *The New Presidential Elite* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation and Twentieth Century Fund, 1976).

⁸Ranney, "The Political Parties," p. 233.

⁹Michael Malbin (ed.), *Parties, Interest Groups, and Campaign Finance Laws* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1980), pt. 3.

¹⁰Angus Campbell, et al., *The American Voter* (New York: Wiley, 1960), chs. 6, 7.

¹¹See Morris Fiorina, *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections* (New Haven: Yale University Press, forthcoming), ch. 5.

¹²For a discussion, see Walter Dean Burnham, *Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics* (New York: Norton, 1970).

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 95.

¹⁴These diagrams are representative of the pre-1950 and post-1970 periods. To see how the earlier world gradually changed to the later, examine the series of diagrams in David Mayhew, "Congressional Elections: The Case of the Vanishing Marginals," *Polity*, 6 (1974): 295-317.

¹⁵See Morris Fiorina, *Congress—Keystone of the Washington Establishment* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).

¹⁶Thomas Mann, *Unsafe at Any Margin* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1978).

¹⁷Edward Tufte, "Determinants of the Outcomes of Midterm Congressional Elections," *American Political Science Review*, 69 (1975): 812-26.

¹⁸Gary Jacobson and Samuel Kernell, *The Structure of Choice*, forthcoming, ch. 5.

¹⁹Fiorina, *Retrospective Voting*, ch. 10.

²⁰This compositional change in the Democratic party has a lot to do with the recent increase in party cohesion in Congress, which some might regard as evidence inconsistent with the argument in the text. Kennedy faced a congressional party that was almost half Southern; Carter faces one only about a quarter Southern. *Ceteris paribus*, this fact should have produced significantly higher levels of party cohesion and presidential support. But party cohesion has only marginally increased, and, as shown in the text, party support for its nominal leader has declined. I suspect that the increase in party cohesion also stems partly from the explosion in roll-call votes. Under the electronic voting system it is now common to record votes on relatively minor legislation. If the Republicans perfunctorily object on a proportion of these, party votes would result, and the overall party cohesion figures would be inflated by such relatively unimportant votes.

²¹Nathan Leites, *On the Game of Politics in France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959).

²²Paul Kleppner, *The Cross of Culture: A Social Analysis of Midwestern Politics, 1850-1900* (New York: Free Press, 1970), ch. 2.

²³*Ibid.*, chs. 3, 4.

²⁴James Sundquist, *Politics and Policy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1968), pp.

²⁵Arthur Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in Government: 1964-1970," *American Political Science Review*, 68 (1974): 951-72; Jack Citrin, "The Political Relevance of Trust in Government," *American Political Science Review*, 68 (1974): 973-88.

²⁶John Ferejohn and Morris Fiorina, "The Decline in Turnout in Presidential Elections," paper presented at the Conference on Voter Turnout, San Diego, 1979.

²⁷There is, of course, a school of thought, dating back at least to John Stuart Mill, that holds that participation is a good in itself. While I am prepared to concede that self-expression is nice, I strongly object to making it the *raison d'être* of democratic politics.

²⁸S. E. Finer, *The Changing British Party System, 1945-1979* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1980).

²⁹*The Party's Over* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. xxv.

³⁰For example, party cohesion would no doubt be strengthened by revising existing statutes to prevent split-ticket voting and to permit campaign contributions only to parties. At the constitutional level, giving the president the power of dissolution and replacing the single-member district system with proportional representation would probably unify the party in government much more than at present. Obviously, changes such as these are not only highly improbable but also exceedingly risky, since we cannot accurately predict the unintended consequences that surely would accompany them.

DAVID VOGEL

The Inadequacy of Contemporary Opposition to Business

THE MOVEMENT TO INCREASE PUBLIC CONTROLS over the large business corporation that began in the late sixties has come to an end. Only four years ago the public interest movement appeared to be at the height of its power and prestige. Buoyed by the election of a president committed to strict enforcement of federal regulation in the areas of health, safety, and environmental and consumer protection, the movement looked forward to four years of fruitful cooperation with a liberal Congress and a regulatory bureaucracy that now included many of its former members. Yet within a year the consumer movement experienced a major unexpected setback when the House voted against establishing a consumer protection agency. Shortly afterward the Administration announced regulations that significantly weakened federal restrictions on the strip-mining of coal.

Since 1978 preregulation forces have been continuously on the defensive. Congress is about to restrict the authority of both the Federal Trade Commission and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, while the Administration supports the establishment of an Energy Mobilization Board that would override environmental regulations in the pursuit of energy development. The whole tone of the political agenda has shifted from a focus on corporate abuses to a preoccupation with reforming the regulations enacted to curb these abuses.

Nor is the increasing influence of business over public policy confined to regulatory issues. The successful corporate backlash against regulation has been paralleled by a major shift in the direction of economic and tax policy. The issue of tax reform that had dominated public discussion of tax policy since the late sixties has been supplanted by a concern with stimulating private savings and corporate investment. In 1978 Congress enacted legislation reducing the taxation on capital gains and is currently seriously considering a number of proposals designed to reduce the effective tax rate paid by corporations. The Federal Reserve's policy of monetary restraint finds its strongest supporters in the business community, while the traditional corporate plea for a balanced budget and lower taxes is at last receiving significant public support. And notwithstanding the passage of the windfall profits tax, the deregulation of the prices of natural gas and newly discovered domestic oil—the cornerstone of the Administration's energy policy—represents a major political triumph for the oil industry.

Why has business become so much more politically successful in recent years? The argument of this essay is that we are not simply observing another swing in the political pendulum from left to right similar to the one that occurred at the end of both the Progressive Era and the New Deal. Unlike during the 1920s and the 1950s, business is winning by default. The contemporary revival of the political influence of business is due less to the appeal of conservative social and economic policies than to the growing public awareness of the inadequacies of the political vision of the left-liberal tradition of American reform.

This tradition has been based on two assumptions about the appropriate relationship between the state and business. The first, originating in the New Deal, is that the most effective means of improving the overall performance of the economy is to allocate government funds to satisfy the social needs of the American public. The use of public sector resources to improve education, health care, housing, and transportation, as well as to provide additional income for the poor and the aged, would not only make America a more decent society; it would also help to sustain a level of aggregate demand sufficient to keep the economy at or near full employment levels. The second, which flows out of the public interest movement that emerged in the late sixties, is that the way to make corporate decisions more accountable to those affected by them is to steadily increase the scope of government regulation of business. By placing constraints on corporate decisions that affect equal employment opportunity, occupational health and safety, and environmental and consumer protection, federal controls increase both the freedom and autonomy of the majority of Americans.¹

There is considerable evidence that neither of these sets of policies is any longer capable of producing its intended results. Even more seriously, they may be exacerbating rather than ameliorating the problems they were designed to solve. Thus, while the share of transfer payments and social welfare expenditures as a percentage of the Gross National Product steadily increased during the seventies, nearly every index of economic performance showed significant declines: the overall health of the American economy is now more precarious than at any time in recent history.² And while there was a steady increase in the formal right and ability of ordinary citizens, workers, and consumers to participate in the shaping of corporate policies throughout the seventies, government regulation of business now faces its most serious crisis of legitimacy in the twentieth century.

There is little evidence that the leadership of left-of-center political constituencies in the United States has adequately understood the significance of these developments. Instead of rethinking the premises that have informed their political vision, the current political focus of the hundreds of liberal trade unions and environmental, consumer, worker, minority, community, and citizen organizations organized under such rubrics as the Campaign for Economic Democracy (CED), the Committee Opposed to Inflation in Necessities (COIN), the Progressive Alliance, the Democratic Agenda, Americans Concerned About Corporate Power (the organizers of Big Business Day)—in short, the left wing of the Democratic party—is simply to blame the lack of success of their policies and programs on corporate opposition to them. They appear unwilling to recognize that the continued satisfaction of the demands of each

of their myriad constituencies—whether through additional social spending or the stricter enforcement of regulations of business—may no longer be compatible with either the long-term expansion of the economy or the vitality of American pluralism.

The result of this failure will be to increase even further the political power of business. An increase in the influence of business is not per se a bad thing. After all, both the 1920s and the 1950s were periods of overall economic growth that helped to lay the groundwork for many of the progressive social reforms that were enacted during subsequent reform periods. But there is little evidence that the leaders of business possess the kind of economic and social vision capable of either restoring public confidence in the integrity of the regulatory process or revitalizing the American economy. The eighties promise not so much effective and socially responsible conservative leadership as a continuation of the political paralysis of the last decade—albeit under right rather than left-of-center auspices.

The Backlash Against Regulation

Prior to the 1960s most government regulation of business by the federal government shared two characteristics: it focused on the behavior of one or a handful of related industries and was primarily concerned with prices and the allocation of market shares. Familiar examples include the Interstate Commerce Commission, the Civil Aeronautics Board, and the Federal Communications Commission. The important new agencies established since the late sixties such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration share neither. Rather, they affect, in principle, all industries, and they are concerned with ameliorating the social impact of businesses, not their economic behavior. While the creation of many of the economic regulatory agencies was strongly supported, and on occasion even initiated, by particular industries in order to stabilize market conditions, the newer social regulatory agencies were established over considerable business opposition. It is the rules and regulations promulgated by the latter agencies that have emerged as the focus of bitter controversy during the latter half of the seventies.

Business opposition to social regulations has focused primarily on their costs. Conservative research centers such as the American Enterprise Institute and the Center for the Study of American Business have issued numerous studies purporting to document the deleterious impact of government regulations enacted since the late sixties on productivity, technological innovations, the level of capital investment, and the rate of price increases.³ The extent to which these regulations have actually impaired the overall performance of the economy remains subject to considerable dispute; there is equally convincing evidence that at least some social regulations have encouraged technological innovation, increased the competitiveness of American industry, created additional employment opportunities, and produced considerable net savings to consumers.⁴

In an important sense this entire dispute is beside the point. What is critical about the consequences of social regulations is not their economic but their political impact. Unlike economic regulations, which essentially interfere with

the decisions of producers, social regulations also tend to restrict the prerogatives of consumers and employees. In the vast majority of circumstances it is simply impossible either to improve the quality of consumer goods or to preserve the physical environment without also placing additional restrictions on the freedom of choice of individuals: social regulations thus regulate the public as well as business. To be sure, such restrictions are often in the long-run interests of the masses of consumers, workers, and taxpayers. However, the political reality is that it is not only business executives who can legitimately complain about growing governmental interference with their daily lives. Public opposition to the mandatory use of seatbelts in automobiles and crash helmets for motorcyclists, the controversy over the FDA's banning of saccharin and other drugs, the disputes surrounding the restrictions placed on residential construction and public access to wilderness areas for recreational purposes—all suggest the extent to which social regulations have come to be resented by the very constituencies whose well-being the public interest movement is dedicated to promoting.⁵

Even more important, the increases in federal controls over social conduct that have occurred since the late sixties have not simply affected the profit sector and those who directly interact with it. A significant number of the regulations designed to reduce corporate prerogatives have also interfered with the management of nonprofit institutions. State and local government officials find themselves under legal pressure from the federal government to provide access to transportation facilities to the handicapped, establish affirmative action programs for women and minorities, and reduce their pollution of the air and water. Political candidates and those responsible for managing political campaigns are now closely regulated by the Federal Election Commission, a regulatory agency that did not even exist a decade ago.⁶ The basic activities of foundations are now more closely regulated by the federal government than at any time in American history.⁷ And the recent complaints of university administrators about the paperwork requirements, the increase in legal and administrative expenses, and the general erosion of academic autonomy owing to increased federal controls closely resemble those made by corporate executives.⁸

Ironically, in the course of attempting to reduce the power and autonomy of business, reformers have increased the likelihood that a wide variety of middle-class professionals—many of whom are indifferent, if not hostile, to the fate of the profit sector—will sympathize with the complaints of business about “excessive” regulation. Beginning with the premise that business is the primary adversary of virtually all Americans, reformers have unwittingly succeeded in making the corporation into an ally of many of these professionals. The analysis of neoconservatives who regard the recent increases in government regulation as a kind of plot by the “new class” to expand its power over the rest of society may prove premature.⁹ Many of these highly educated individuals, including lawyers, doctors, city planners, educators, academics, and social workers, are now likely to be at the cutting edge of opposition to additional government restrictions on the institutions in which they work as well as over their professional associations.¹⁰

A convincing case can be made for the social desirability of each of the more than fifty major pieces of regulatory legislation enacted by the federal govern-

ment since 1964: in every case the enactment of these laws represented a response to real abuses and injustices. Moreover, there can be no question that these regulations have, on balance, considerably improved the economic opportunities and physical well-being of a significant number of Americans. Reformers can be credited with making business operations, universities, political parties, foundations, and even many state and local governments far more accountable than they were in the early sixties to those whose lives are affected by their decisions. But at the same time, an important price has been paid for these changes: they have been accompanied by a major increase in power of the federal regulatory bureaucracy in American society.

The efforts of left-liberal reformers have paradoxically made America both more and less pluralist. American politics has become more pluralist in the sense that a far greater number of political interests now have more effective political representation than in the recent past: consumers, environmentalists, various ethnic and racial minorities, the handicapped, women, the aged, gays—all have seen a significant improvement in their ability to participate in the political processes. The recent wave of political victories by business has reduced the influence of many of these groups, but the constituencies they represent will nonetheless remain a permanent part of American politics.

Yet there appears to be a tension between political and institutional pluralism: the former is undermining the latter. While American politics has become more pluralist, American society itself has become significantly less so.¹¹ Each of the major intermediary institutions of American society—corporations, foundations, universities, political parties, state and local governments, hospitals, even various civic and charitable organizations—has experienced a major reduction in its autonomy and independence. The cumulative effect of the left-liberal reforms enacted over the last fifteen years has been to make virtually every institution in American society increasingly dependent on the federal government. Not only has the distinction between regulated and nonregulated industries become obsolete, but so has the degree of regulation of profit and nonprofit institutions. In principle, the power of regulatory officials is constrained by both the courts and the Congress. In reality, both these branches of government are severely limited in their ability to oversee the literally tens of thousands of rules and regulations promulgated by the various federal administrative agencies each year. Moreover, even if the decisions of regulatory administrators are eventually overturned, the process of decision-making has already become both more prolonged and expensive.

The result is that, while the rights of citizens to participate in the shaping of regulatory policies has significantly increased, the net consequence of many recent reforms has been to shift the locus of unaccountability from the directors of various intermediary institutions to federal administrators or, on occasion, to federal judges. This major transfer of power has taken place with the best of progressive intentions, but its political consequences have been to strengthen significantly the conservative case against “big government.” At the same time that American politics has become more representative, American government has become less responsive. The number of people who are actually able to participate in the regulatory process as a result of the procedural reforms initiated by the public interest movement numbers in the thousands—and most of

these are professional activists rather than typical citizens. For the remainder, the federal government has become the primary source of unaccountable and arbitrary decision-making. The public interest movement has thus failed to accomplish its most professed important goal: instead of increasing the legitimacy of government regulation, it has unwittingly spawned a backlash against it.

The Politics of Economic Growth

The second critical factor underlying the declining political strength of left-liberal forces in the United States is the inadequacy of their solutions to the problems that confront the American economy. If one examines the hundred-year-old struggle between the large corporation and its adversaries in the United States, one central fact emerges: the American public has supported whichever "side" has offered the most effective program for promoting real economic growth. The ability of the eastern-based industrial and financial institutions to dominate American politics from the 1870s through the 1920s ultimately rested on their capacity to manage successfully the transformation of America from an agrarian to a modern industrial society. Notwithstanding the considerable personal hardships endured by many Americans during this period, as well as the periodic ravages of the business cycle, the real standard of living of the overwhelming majority of immigrant and native Americans steadily and significantly increased during this fifty-year span. The failure of the Populists during the latter part of the nineteenth century and the urban-based Socialists during the early part of the twentieth century to challenge effectively the power of business was due in large measure to their inability to convince the American public that they were more capable than business of sustaining American economic growth.

It took a disaster the magnitude of the Great Depression to undermine public confidence in the leadership of eastern industrial and financial elites. Americans supported the reforms of the New Deal because they represented an effective alternative of restoring the viability of the American private sector. While the performance of the American economy was relatively undistinguished during the 1930s, the three central economic policies of the New Deal—assistance to farmers, support for trade unions, and the inauguration of the welfare state—did in fact significantly improve the material welfare of the masses of Americans, particularly those who had not shared proportionately in the abundance of the 1920s.

What gave political credibility to liberal forces in America during the quarter-century following the Second World War was their ability to argue effectively that the expansion of the welfare state and the adoption of the principles of Keynesian economics was not only compatible with economic prosperity, but essential to it. The postwar liberal program rested on the demonstrated interdependency of social justice and business prosperity. In essence, the appeal of both Keynesianism in the United States and Social Democracy in Western Europe was that the Left could manage capitalism better than business could. Both successfully persuaded the public that what business wanted—namely a reduction of government intervention in the economy—was not what capitalism needed. And in fact they were right: while business enjoyed a resur-

gence of political influence during the fifties, much of the credit for the spectacular performance of the capitalist democracies between the mid-forties and the late sixties can be attributed legitimately to the influence of left-liberal policies.

It is a truism to suggest that the kinds of policies responsible for promoting economic expansion in the postwar decades are no longer capable of achieving this objective. But, at least in the United States, the left-of-center political community has not been able to formulate a coherent replacement for them. More important, I suspect that much of the Left has given up on the long-term potential of the American economic system. Instead of seeking to restore the vitality and international competitiveness of our large and small corporations, left-of-center politics in America has become preoccupied with alleviating immediate hardships. It is revealing that the most frequently mentioned solution to the decline in American living standards is price controls on large corporations. Whatever its other virtues, this policy assuredly offers no prospects of increasing the nation's output of goods and services or of reversing the decline in the rate of savings and investment.

The strategy that informs contemporary opposition to corporate priorities is primarily defensive. It is based largely on the assumption that, regardless of whatever changes have taken place within the world (or domestic) economic order over the last decade, no one in America (except perhaps investors and corporate executives) should suffer any decline in their living standards or change in their life-styles. Thus, no matter that the emergence of OPEC has resulted in a dramatic increase in the price of imported oil, American consumers should not be charged higher energy prices; no matter that production of ships, textiles, steels, and autos is increasingly taking place in newly industrializing nations, American workers who now are employed in these sectors should continue to produce these products; no matter that a major portion of the world's population now depends on the production of American agriculture, Americans should not be charged higher prices for food; no matter that the pattern of regional economic development in the United States is different from what it was a generation ago, communities in the Northeast that were once major sources of industrial employment should remain so.

Ironically, the interest groups on the left-of-center have unwittingly adopted a remarkable conservative vision of the good society. Their opposition to agricultural mechanization and enthusiasm for the family farm, their desire to prevent the closing of existing factories in the Northeast and the emergence of new industrial centers in the South, their hostility to "gentrification" and support for price controls on rent in urban areas, and their refusal to consider any reduction in transfer payments and subsidies to the middle class in order to increase savings and investment—all essentially reflect a desire to maintain the economic relationships that prevailed in the early 1970s, when the United States was still the world's hegemonic economic power. The Left's ideal society bears a close resemblance to that of France during the Third Republic—a political system whose major priority was the prevention of any dislocation caused by economic forces.

As the experiences of virtually every other capitalist democracy clearly demonstrate, there is nothing inherently incompatible between extensive public or

social control over investment decisions and a viable economy. But it is important to distinguish between the use of either public or private funds that satisfy the immediate economic needs of particular political constituencies or communities and those that seek to encourage self-sustaining economic development. Too much of the kind of government intervention supported by segments of the Left—additional subsidies for housing or health care, the investment of public funds in obsolete steel mills as in Youngstown, Ohio, or the establishment of a “Marshall Plan” for northeastern cities—represents examples of the former. They amount essentially to drains on the nation’s limited supply of capital, contributing little or nothing to the revitalization of America’s industrial base. Such “social investments” are actually devices for increasing public consumption.

Much of the current effort to increase the control of workers over their pension funds appears equally shortsighted: rather than reinvesting some of these funds into potentially profitable, though somewhat risky, small commercial enterprises overlooked by existing pension fund managers, trade unions are likely to use a significant share of whatever funds they succeed in controlling to provide various social benefits, most notably subsidized housing, to the communities in which their members reside. Since the funds will come from the sale of stock in the nation’s major corporations, the overall rate of savings in the United States—already the lowest of any industrial nation—will decline still further.¹²

Moreover, underlying much of the criticism of “runaway plants” and the “flight of capital” is an apparent commitment to national economic autonomy—or in some extreme versions, community autarky—that appears remarkably naive in a world economy increasingly dominated by international aggregations of capital. It is one thing to require corporations to publicly justify their decisions to close down particular plants and to cushion the effects of the withdrawal of their capital from communities that have become dependent on them; in many cases such moves involve a net loss to society not adequately reflected on corporate balance sheets. But that is an entirely different matter from attempting to prevent firms from relocating their facilities—whether within or outside of the United States—when doing so would significantly reduce their production costs. Such a policy would not only raise the price of goods to consumers in the short run, but would also further undermine the international competitiveness of American-based companies. The withdrawal of investments from mature or declining industries in order to make them available to more productive firms is a painful process. The long-term future of the American economy, however, requires that it be encouraged, not thwarted.

A similar commitment to the status quo pervades many of the demands for increased corporate accountability. Corporate abuses clearly persist, and the search for policies that can curb them more effectively needs to continue. But the left-liberal image of corporations as “private governments” betrays an unduly optimistic faith in the future of the large American corporation.¹³ In fact, there is a high probability that a significant number of our largest and most established private enterprises will not survive this decade—at least in anything resembling their present form.

In a sense, much of the controversy over who should control American big business resembles a dispute over who should captain the Titanic. Instead of

concentrating on placing additional controls on established companies, progressive forces should be devoting their energies to insuring the emergence of a new generation of profitable and technologically innovative enterprises. Controlling General Motors is less important than ensuring that some company will emerge to replace it two decades from now. But, with the exception of solar energy and the revitalization of the northeastern rail system—both of whose economic usefulness is yet to be established—the left-liberal community has offered few suggestions as to the sources of wealth creation in future decades.¹⁴

In final analysis, there is simply no substitute for economic growth. Whatever the tensions created by rising affluence—and they are clearly considerable—they pale beside the social and political consequences of economic stagnation.¹⁵ Conservatives are incorrect in asserting that a healthy profit sector is a sufficient condition for improving the material and social welfare of the American citizenry. But much of the Left is equally mistaken in its current belief that it is no longer a necessary one. By appearing to deemphasize the importance of restoring high growth rates, the left-liberal forces have effectively abandoned the initiatives for formulating alternative economic policies to business and their conservative allies.

If the political initiative for formulating alternative regulatory and economic policies has in fact passed to business, can we then look forward to a reversal of the decline of growth rates and the increased centralization of power in the hands of unelected federal officials during the eighties? There are substantial grounds for pessimism.

First, the causes of the erosion of America's industrial strength may be outside the effective control of American policy-makers—whatever the depth of their commitment to the prosperity of the private sector. Business may get everything it claims it must have from government, including accelerated depreciation allowances, further reduction of the taxation of capital gains, a reduction in federal spending, restrictive monetary policies, and a repeal of major social regulations—and still the performance of the American economy over the next decade may remain undistinguished. For any number of reasons—not the least of which is the continued control of oil prices by OPEC—not only the United States but the entire world capitalist system may be unable to return to the growth rates of the postwar decades. We may be in the midst of a prolonged economic downturn that will persist regardless of the economic policies of any or all capitalist nations.¹⁶

Second, there is a considerable likelihood that corporations will use the current decline of their liberal adversaries primarily to maximize a variety of short-term objectives. These will benefit particular companies and industries but leave the core problems of the economy as a whole untouched.¹⁷ It is in this context that the current enthusiasm of substantial portions of the private sector for governmental assistance to compensate for their inability to compete in world markets is deeply disturbing. The bailout of Chrysler and the establishment of trigger-price mechanisms for steel, whatever their short-term benefit to particular stockholders and employees, merely serve to postpone the necessary adjustment of the economy to changing world market conditions. The establishment of a quota system for automobile imports would have a similar though more disastrous impact on the long-term efficiency of American en-

terprises: in this instance what is good for General Motors is clearly not good for America.

It is one thing for American consumers and workers to use government to shield themselves from the effects of economic dislocation; their immediate options are clearly limited. But if significant segments of American business now use their political influence to win various concessions from government that serve to stabilize their market positions, we can look forward to an even more serious long-term decline in the competitiveness of American industry. As Schumpeter argued in his classic *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, economic growth is made possible not by the preservation of existing firms but by their destruction.¹⁸ If the Left worries too much about the power of existing firms, the Right worries too much about their profits. It would be the height of irony if after relentlessly criticizing liberals for using transfer payments and price controls to shield individuals from the effects of economic dislocations, the private sector were to adopt the same kinds of shortsighted policies.

Similarly, the corporate drive against government social regulations is unlikely to address the need to restore the vitality of American pluralism. Executives pay increasing lip service to the need to restore the vitality of the third sector—private nonprofit institutions and organizations—but an examination of their concrete proposals to roll back government regulation shows the profit sector preoccupied with its own immediate interests. The regulations that are likely to be reduced over the next few years are those that are particularly obnoxious to particular segments of the business community—particularly small business or financially pressed industries such as steel or autos—not those that affect both profit and nonprofit sectors alike. Moreover, instead of a more rational, responsible weighing of economic costs and social benefits, business is as likely to prove as insensitive to legitimate social concerns as the public interest movement has been to economic costs. Particular industries are likely to use the public's current antiregulatory movement simply to get rid of regulations that offend them, not merely those that are indeed superfluous or counterproductive.¹⁹

There is a final reason for pessimism. There is no question that in the immediate future the majority of the American population will be faced with declining living standards. Any serious effort to reduce inflation or increase the funds available for investment will involve considerable economic sacrifices. Whether or not the American public will accept these hardships will depend on their confidence in the leadership of those responsible for these policies. What will prevent business from wielding the kind of influence over American society in the 1980s that it did in the 1920s and 1950s is simply that its contemporary political influence has not been accompanied by a proportionate increase in its legitimacy; whatever public support business has been able to muster for its opposition to regulation and for reducing taxes and government expenditures rests on a rather fragile coincidence of interests, not on any fundamental shift in public acceptance of the role of the large corporation.²⁰ Because of this lack of public support, business will find it very difficult to win political acceptance of conservative economic programs that require significant short-term economic sacrifices.

We thus come full circle. The Left, which might be capable of convincing the American people to make economic sacrifices, is unwilling to recognize the need for Americans to reduce their levels of both private and public consumption. The Right, on the other hand, better understands the nature of our economic difficulties, but the public does not trust its analysis or accept its solution. As a result, we can probably look forward to a decade of continued political paralysis.

REFERENCES

The author gratefully acknowledges the comments and criticisms of David Langsam, Robert Harris, and Tom Bonnett.

¹For a detailed discussion and critique of the political philosophy of the public interest movement, see David Vogel, "Promoting Pluralism: The Public Interest Movement and the American Reform Tradition," *Political Science Quarterly*, forthcoming, 1980.

²This does not imply causality. Rather, it suggests that expanding the social welfare state no longer contributes to the expansion of the economy, thus undermining a central tenet of liberal Keynesianism.

³A good summary of their arguments can be found in Murray L. Weidenbaum, "The Trend of Government Regulation of Business," a paper prepared for a Conference on Regulation, Hoover Institution, July 9, 1979. A more popular version can be found in Weidenbaum, *The Future of Business Regulation* (New York: Amacom, 1979). See also William Lilley III and James C. Miller III, "The New Social Regulation," American Enterprise Institute, Report no. 66, 1977.

⁴The most comprehensive defense of social regulations is in Mark Green and Norman Waitzman, "Business War on the Law: An Analysis of the Benefits of Federal Health/Safety Enforcement," Corporate Accountability Research Group, 1979. See also Green and Waitzman, "A Challenge to Murray Weidenbaum," *New York Times*, October 28, 1979, Sec. III.

⁵See, for example, Marjorie Boyd, "The Protection Consumers Don't Want," *The Washington Monthly*, September 1977: 29-34; "Regulators and the Polls," *Regulation*, November/December 1978: 10, 11, 54.

A January 1978 poll by CBS News and the *New York Times* revealed that, when asked about government regulation *in general*, 58 percent of the public agreed that the government "has gone too far in regulating business and interfering with the free enterprise system," while only 31 percent disagreed.

In the same poll fewer than half believed the government should regulate the sale of allegedly dangerous food and drugs (46 percent), pornography (42 percent), or saccharin (28 percent). (p. 11) The FDA's efforts no doubt contributed to a 1977 finding by Lou Harris and Associates that, by a plurality of 44 percent to 39 percent, the public believes, "there is too much government regulation of consumer products, and the [FDA] is just overprotecting the public." (p. 54) For a discussion of the extent to which environmental regulations have interfered with the construction of new housing, see Bernard J. Frieden, *The Environmental Protection Hustle* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1979). For criticism of the environmental movement in general from a similar perspective, see William Tucker, "Environmentalists and the Leisure Class," *Harper's*, December 1977: 49-80.

⁶See *Parties, Interest Groups and Campaign Finance Laws*, Michael Malbin (ed.) (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1979), particularly the essays by Edwin Epstein, Robert J. Keefe, and Richard B. Cheney. See also "An Analysis of the Impact of the Federal Election Campaign Act, 1972-1978," Institute of Politics, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 1979.

⁷For a sober discussion of the impact of federal regulation on the "third sector," i.e., private nonprofit institutions in general and foundations in particular, see Waldemar A. Nielsen, *The Endangered Sector* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979).

⁸See, for example, Derek C. Bok, "The Federal Government and the University," *The Public Interest*, Winter, 1980: 80-101.

⁹For the neoconservative case against the "new class," see Irving Kristol, *Two Cheers for Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1978); and B. Bruce Briggs (ed.), *The New Class* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1979).

¹⁰See, for example, Ithiel de Sola Pool, "The New Censorship of Social Research," *The Public Interest*, Spring, 1980: 57-66, for a discussion of proposed HEW restrictions on social science research that are already meeting with considerable opposition from social scientists across the political spectrum.

¹¹The notion that pluralism consists of a plurality of institutions relatively independent from the state was an important tenet of British socialist thought at the turn of the century. See, for example, the works of Harold Laski and G. D. H. Cole. As used by American political scientists, the term refers to interest groups rather than institutions.

¹²While it is true that advocates of "alternative investments" focus on their potential for "community or neighborhood development," most of their proposals would have the net effect of shifting funds from investment in the private sector to consumption through the public. A good summary of this strategy can be found in *Public Employees Pension Funds: New Strategies for Investment*, Lee Webb and William Schweke (eds.), Conference on Alternative State and Local Policies, Washington, D.C., 1979.

¹³This notion informed the philosophy and strategy of "Big Business Day," held on April 17, 1980. For an overview of the perspective of the organizers of this "event," see the Case for a Corporate Democracy Act of 1980. Public Citizens Congress Watch, the Council on Economic Priorities, Building Construction Trade Council, AFL-CIO, Washington, D.C., 1980. The term "private governments" is used frequently by critics of business. See, for example, the essays by John Kenneth Galbraith and Robert A. Dahl in Ralph Nader and Mark Green (eds.), *Corporate Power in America* (New York: Grossman, 1973).

¹⁴A belief in the virtues of solar energy as a solution to America's economic difficulties has assumed almost mystical proportions among much of the Left. It is the central tenet of Hayden's "Campaign for Economic Democracy," as well as the "Citizen's Party" headed by Barry Commoner. One of the few critics on the Left to even address the shortage of the nation's output of goods and services and the need to increase productivity is Gar Alperovitz. The economics of much of his analysis, however, remains rather vague. See Gar Alperovitz, "Confronting the True Agenda," *Wharton Magazine*, September 1980: 64-67.

¹⁵For a good summary of the disastrous consequence of a slowdown in growth rates, see Lester Thurow, *The Zero-Sum Society* (New York: Basic Books, 1980).

¹⁶See W. W. Rostow, "Kondratieff, Schumpeter and Kuznets: Trend Periods Revisited," *Journal of Economic History*, December 1975: 719-53, for an analysis and defense of this position.

¹⁷There is some evidence that the Business Roundtable is attempting to promote a class, rather than industry-wide, consciousness among American business executives. For example, the RT opposed both aid to Chrysler and subsidy of the domestic merchant marine industry. Whether the RT will be able to oppose effectively the growing neomercantilism of many of its members remains, at this juncture, problematic. See David Vogel, "Businessmen Unite," *Wall Street Journal*, January 14, 1980.

¹⁸Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1940), ch. 7, pt. 2; ch. 8.

¹⁹A case in point would be the funeral directors lobby, which singlehandedly managed to delay congressional funding for the Federal Trade Commission for more than two weeks.

²⁰It is revealing that the resurgence of business political influence since 1978 has *not* been accompanied by an increase in public confidence in corporate leadership. According to Lou Harris and Associates, the percentage of the public expressing "a great deal of confidence in the individuals running major companies" was 22% in 1978, 18% in 1979, and 19% in 1980. The number fluctuated between 15% and 23% during the preceding three years.

BARRY BOSWORTH

Re-establishing an Economic Consensus: An Impossible Agenda?

THE CURRENT CONDITION OF THE U.S. ECONOMY occasions many expressions of pessimism and concern. The problems appear to multiply at an alarming rate: inflation has worsened; living standards have been reduced; the nation finds itself increasingly vulnerable to foreign economic events that it cannot control. In addition, the economy has entered into a recession that may prove to be more severe and longer-lasting than that of 1974-1975. Equally depressing, it is obvious that a coherent economic policy to address these problems has yet to emerge. Indeed, there is no agreement today within the Administration, Congress, or the general public on even the outlines of such a policy. The consensus that surrounded economic policy in the 1960s has clearly broken down. Yet, without such general support there is no possibility of a policy being pursued for a period of time sufficient to offer a reasonable chance of success. Hence, the growing unease about the future of the American economy is as much the result of the aimless drift of policy as it is of the intrinsic difficulty of the problems it must address. Many are led to ask questions about what happened to the prior consensus on economic policy and why it has been so difficult to re-establish a similar agreement today.

The Sixties

The answer to the question of whatever happened to the consensus of the 1960s is that it never existed. Certainly not within the economics profession of the period did it exist to the extent that the public was then led to believe or that our own fond memories today would imply. At the beginning of the decade there were strongly divergent views about the appropriate direction of economic policy. Then there began to occur a gradual focusing of economists' attention on the issues of inflation and unemployment, on the relationship of both to the level of aggregate demand, and on the role of fiscal policy as a tool for controlling demand—but these issues were never settled within the profession. At the beginning of the Kennedy Administration, however, a specific school of economic thought was brought into government and became, in a manner of speaking, the establishment. This group of economists soon came to control a majority of the centers of economic policymaking within the government; they

shared a common view about the appropriate direction that needed to be taken for economic policy to solve all the major problems.

The policies were essentially Keynesian; they emphasized that government could control the level of aggregate demand through the rational manipulation of fiscal and monetary policy. Of critical importance to this policy was the idea that by controlling demand—avoiding the extremes of excess demand and recession—government would also achieve an acceptable compromise between inflation and unemployment. The notion of a stable tradeoff between inflation and unemployment was perhaps most clearly enunciated in the empirical formulation of the “Phillips Curve.” The interpretation of the inflation process that underlay this relationship always smelled just a little of “*ad hocery*” and seemed to lack a solid theoretical basis, but this was not generally admitted. Still, some of the doubts about whether demand management alone would be enough were evident in the development of wage-price guideposts and in the almost perpetual government jawboning of private wage-price decisions.

The consensus that appeared to surround this program was largely an “ex post” development based in no small measure on its success. Initially, the effort to adopt a more stimulative fiscal policy encountered strong resistance in Congress where many feared that it would add to the budget deficit. While a small tax reduction was tried as a fiscal stimulus in 1961-1962, the major tax cut was delayed until 1964. Still, these policies contributed to a strong and sustained economic expansion, unemployment was sharply reduced, and, for several years at least, inflation was conspicuous by its absence.

The program began to unravel in the mid-1960s initially because the President's economic advisors were misled about the magnitude of the defense build-up in Vietnam and later because they were unable to convince the President of a need for a tax increase to finance the war. The President, for his part, doubted that a tax increase would be approved by Congress and further was concerned that higher taxes would erode public support for the war and derail his new social programs. The result: several years of excessive demand stimulus and the re-emergence of a serious inflation problem.

The post-1965 period also witnessed a breakdown in the coordination of fiscal and monetary policy. In the earlier period fiscal policy had been the more active element; monetary policy tended to follow in an essentially accommodative path. The failure to offset the fiscal stimulus of the defense surge in 1966 led to an effort to restrain the expansion of demand with monetary policy. The resulting restraint was very uneven: most of the output reduction was in home-building, and severe strains were placed on U.S. financial institutions. A coordinated policy of fiscal and monetary restraint was in fact not achieved until 1969; by that time, the inflation had developed a strong self-sustaining momentum.

The fundamental breakdown of demand management policies and the collapse of a policy consensus, however, occurred principally during the 1969 recession. This episode implied that, while the combination of fiscal and monetary restraint slowed the rate of demand growth, this reduction failed to slow inflation but was translated instead largely into a reduced output and a rise of unemployment from 3.5 to 6 percent of the labor force. While the government was able to control demand, that control did not translate into control over inflation. Economists, at first, viewed the problem as one of lags in the response

of prices and wage rates; they recommended patience and a continuation of restrictive policies. By the beginning of 1971, however, wage rate increases had actually accelerated slightly despite the high unemployment; and, once excess inventories had been disposed of, the rate of price increases also picked up. Demand restraint was abandoned in 1971; the government now shifted to a policy of fiscal-monetary stimulus with wage and price controls.

The key to the breakup of the demand management policies of the 1960s, then, was the failure to control inflation together with the unexpectedly high unemployment costs involved in fighting inflation with demand restraint. These problems were exacerbated by the political difficulties of obtaining a prompt adjustment of fiscal policy to offset the stimulus created by Vietnam War expenditures.

Coincidental with this, within the economics profession major attacks on the Phillips Curve formulation of the inflation process were developed by Milton Friedman and others. They insisted that the benefits of a demand stimulus policy that reduced unemployment to low levels would only be temporary. In their view, at low levels of unemployment, inflation would steadily accelerate, particularly as participants in the economy came to incorporate past rates of inflation into their expectations of the future. The result, they said, would be a tendency toward an escalating inflation at low levels of unemployment. This debate over inflation continued within the economics profession throughout the 1970s. With the breakup of a cohesive economic policy group within the government, and given the growing difficulties of the policymakers, the public became more aware of this dissension and more sensitive to the wide range of professional opinion that existed.

The Current Challenge

The process of reestablishing some sort of consensus on policies to deal with the economic challenges of the 1980s will almost certainly be even more difficult than it was in the past. The problems are more serious and more complex; they involve major empirical issues that economists have not been able to agree about; and also, for a variety of reasons, the political barriers to reaching agreement are more substantial. Most important, these are not demand-side problems; they cannot be solved by focusing on the kinds of traditional demand-management policies that have dominated economic policy since the end of World War II.

To begin with, the current inflation is not primarily a reflection of excess demand. It may be more aptly described as a combination of (1) a self-perpetuating underlying cycle of wage and price inflation that is only loosely related to overall demand conditions and may be more reflective of the fact that inflation has existed in the past and that everyone expects it to continue, and (2) a series of shocks or disturbances that exacerbate the underlying rate of inflation and raise it to a higher plateau. The underlying rate of inflation reflects a process where each individual perceives his own actions as simply a defensive reaction to the inflationary actions of others, where wage increases are fueled not so much by a perception of labor shortages but by a desire to match past price increases and the wages of others and also by expectations that the process will

continue, and where, on the price side, most business firms justify their price increases as a simple pass-through of cost increases. Everyone participates in the process, but no one sees himself as the cause. While many realize that they are not gaining very much from this repetitive cycle, no one dares exercise restraint because there is no assurance that others will do the same.

The United States in the last decade has experienced a number of shocks that have exacerbated the situation, raising the inflation to new heights. At times, in the latter part of the 1960s and in 1972-1973, for example, excess aggregate demand was an important factor. Other circumstances need also to be taken into account: the increased integration of the world economy has left the United States far more vulnerable to crop failures, to sharp increases in petroleum prices, and to other disruptions in international markets. Finally, because government is more actively involved in individual markets, its actions have often initiated an upward pressure on wages or prices or both. Large price increases in such markets may have an immediate and dramatic impact on the inflation rate; but they also have a longer-lasting effect when everyone else escalates his own wage and price increases in an effort to catch up. The result is an upward ratcheting of the underlying rate of inflation and a carry-over of these new costs into future years.

The underlying cycle of industrial wage and price increases has for several years averaged 7-8 percent annually. In 1978-1979, however, sharp price increases for food, housing, and energy drove the overall inflation to an annual rate of 13 percent. In early 1980, exceptionally high interest rates temporarily raised the rate of increase of the consumer price index as high as 18 percent. Most analysts believe that the worst of these shocks are now behind us. Still, the effort to catch up with this past burst of price increases is leading to a steady escalation of domestic wage and price increases and an upward ratcheting of the underlying momentum of the inflation. The United States enters the 1980s with a built-in self-sustaining inflation rate of about 10 percent and a continuing vulnerability to further shocks that could drive the inflation even higher.

The task for economic policy is two-fold: to break the momentum of the underlying wage-price cycle and to find a means for avoiding or dampening the influence of potential future shocks that threaten to accelerate the process. The dilemma for policymakers results from the fact that any renewed effort to respond with fiscal and monetary restraints on demand can only be successful at the cost of extremely high levels of unemployment.

The difficulty of controlling inflation is further complicated by the emergence of another problem, the decline in productivity growth. In the period between the end of World War II and the late 1960s, labor productivity (output per manhour) expanded at a relatively steady rate of about 3 percent annually. In the early 1970s, that growth rate fell off to about 2 percent annually. Many observers attributed this to the poor performance of the economy as a whole; they expected a strong recovery after the 1975 recession. In fact, however, the growth rate has continued to be slow, averaging less than 1 percent in the past five years; last year, productivity actually declined.

Productivity, an esoteric subject for much of the general public, is in fact the major method for achieving a general increase in average living standards. Without a growth in productivity, greater income for some must be at the expense of others. The issue of stagnant or declining real incomes is only now becoming a

really significant public issue. While the decline in productivity growth was already evident in the failure of real wages to grow during the 1970s, it was not reflected in real family incomes; these continued to rise at the same rate as they had in the preceding decade. This was made possible largely by a rapid shift to two-income earning families, together with a sharp expansion of non-wage transfer income financed principally by reducing the defense share of the government budget and by higher deficit financing. The tax burden on individuals rose less rapidly in the 1970s than in the 1960s.

It is impossible for these trends to be sustained in the 1980s. Neither job opportunities nor demographic projections promise continued increases in the proportion of the population employed; also, there are now strong pressures to increase defense spending as a share of total budget outlays. Without a growth in total income the past growth of transfers can only be sustained by offsetting tax rate increases. Thus, in the 1980s, the implications of slow productivity growth on standards of living must become more evident. The situation will be particularly serious for those in the industrial sector if prices of basic consumer items such as food, energy, and housing continue to rise more rapidly than the prices of the products and services that they produce.

A pattern of little or no growth in general living standards is likely to have major implications for a heterogeneous population like that of the United States. In the past, a portion of each year's productivity dividend was generally used to improve social security programs, expand private health and retirement benefits, and raise the relative income of the most disadvantaged; yet, there remained a residual amount sufficient to allow for a significant general increase in real incomes. Mediation among conflicting groups was accomplished by promising more to some without actually reducing the incomes of others. Thus, slow productivity growth would seem to be an almost certain prescription for increased social conflict. In addition, it will certainly complicate the effort to slow inflation. It is not easy to obtain restraint on nominal wage demands when the average worker notes that prices are in fact rising faster than his wages. While this problem of falling real wages cannot be solved collectively by an acceleration of nominal wages, which simply passes through into a higher rate of price increase, many individuals and groups are certain to try that remedy—indeed they must if others do.

Finally, the success of any anti-inflation program will be extremely problematic so long as the United States continues to be dependent on an unstable supply of petroleum. Even without a supply disruption, the continued effort to finance oil imports of approximately \$75 billion annually will place severe stress on the American economy. This country cannot earn a surplus of \$75 billion on its non-petroleum trade with other countries—particularly when all the others are trying to do the same. Yet, if the deficit is allowed to exert downward pressure on the foreign exchange rate, the costs of imports rise and inflation becomes even more serious. Alternatively, an increase in interest rates, as a means of financing the American deficit through the inflow of foreign funds, must depress domestic capital formation, only adding to the country's productivity problem.

Thus, three issues—inflation, slow productivity growth, dependency on foreign oil—are likely to dominate American economic policy for some time to come. The problems are interrelated; any economic policy consensus is going to

have to deal with them in an integrated fashion. Yet, so far, the policy initiatives have dealt with each in isolation and the result has been conflict and stalemate; efforts intended to correct one have often conflicted with the others.

To develop a coordinated economic policy is to struggle against the fragmentation and disarray that are so characteristic of the present time. There is no consensus among economists today as to the measures that need to be taken. Institutional changes within the executive branch of government make it immensely difficult to develop a coherent pattern of economic advice and policy options for the President's consideration. While it has always been difficult to win congressional approval for presidential programs, changes in the political process make that even more unlikely today. Since these factors are combined with a declining public belief in the competency of government and in its ability to solve problems, the outlook is far from encouraging.

Professional Dissent

The professional debate over the uses of fiscal and monetary restraint for fighting inflation has raged for over a decade; there are no signs of its being resolved soon. In part, the public confusion over what appears to be conflicting professional opinions derives from a tendency to use the terms fiscal and monetary restraint euphemistically. It is important to remember that such policies affect individual wage and price decisions only by increasing unemployment. If the economy were an aggregation of competitive auction-type markets such as the one that now exists for wheat, a relatively small reduction in demand and employment would be enough to have a quite substantial impact on both price and wage decisions. In a perfectly competitive economy individuals are supposed to be restrained in their wage and price demands by fears that they will lose jobs or sales. In modern industrial economies, however, markets are much more complex than wheat markets. The process works very unevenly; inflation persists even in the face of substantial unemployment. Thus, the costs in terms of unemployment are greater than was once anticipated. The average experience of recent recessions, for example, suggests that a reduction in the inflation rate by a single percentage point requires an increase in unemployment of at least a million individuals for at least a two-year period. Most of the argument revolves around whether such costs are worth paying.

The general public, while thoroughly confused by the debate, forms its opinion largely on the basis of whether or not it expects to figure among the unemployed in the next recession. During periods of economic expansion the fear of unemployment subsides and concern with inflation grows. While a coalition may quickly form around the desirability of restrictive fiscal and monetary policies in good times, without thought being given to the consequences, once a recession begins and unemployment starts to move up, the coalition falls apart and government quickly shifts toward policies intended to expand demand and create new employment. The results, inevitably, are frequent reversals of policy moving from one extreme to the other, with an economy of increasing uncertainty. The inability to conduct laboratory experiments in this sphere allows for continual second-guessing; the common arguments are: "We will do it differently next time; we waited too long; the restraint was too extreme; if only the

policy had been sustained just a little longer." Yet, the apparent waning of the competitive threat of lost jobs or lost sales as an efficient regulator of wages and prices raises a problem that every modern democratic economy has been forced to grapple with. Can the traditional policies of demand management achieve an acceptable compromise on inflation and unemployment? If not, are there alternatives?

Resolving the issues of slow productivity growth gives rise to the same cacophony of opinions. This problem is complicated by the inability to account for the decline in the growth rate that has occurred since the mid-1960s; it involves a study of the complex interaction of technological innovation, capital formation, economies of scale, increased specialization, and changes in the quality of the work force. Many of these elements are difficult to measure; some have varied over a relatively narrow range in recent years, and this further complicates the effort to identify and explain their role. The slowdown may be principally the result of an inexperienced work force—many new entrants have poured into the labor market recently—but the costs of expanded regulation need also to be considered, not to speak of the importance of a slower growth of the capital stock. How is one to estimate the weight to be given each of these? An increased emphasis on research and development and on capital formation would figure in any conventional set of recommendations for government policy. There are, however, widely divergent views on the importance of tax incentives for business investment; even more on how inflation, monetary restraint, and recession affect capital formation and productivity.

Finally, while there would be some support for an energy policy that raised domestic prices to encourage production and to discourage consumption, such price increases may only exacerbate the problems of inflation and create intense equity issues for individuals and for certain regions of the country. Also, in many instances, factors other than price are more critical in limiting domestic supplies.

To some extent the various professional viewpoints on such specific issues can be resolved within a comprehensive policy framework that provides for tradeoffs between the different goals. It is important to keep in mind, however, that the potential range of policy actions involves major gains and losses to different segments of the population. In these circumstances, it is scarcely surprising that there is no professional consensus on a particular economic program or on the likely consequences of many of the individual elements of any such potential program.

Polymaking in the Executive Branch

The process of economic policy formulation within the executive branch has become immensely complex and fragmented. In earlier periods, the organizational structure—as now—was loose and informal. So long as the emphasis was principally on fiscal and monetary policy, the process could be dominated by the Treasury, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the Council on Economic Advisors (CEA), and the Federal Reserve system. Other agencies, frustrated by the monopoly that CEA in particular exercised over professional economic analysis, were not in a position to do very much to diminish that

influence. In the 1970s, this changed; government became increasingly involved in a greater number of microeconomic policy programs controlled by many agencies. The Environmental Protection Agency, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and the Departments of Commerce, Agriculture, Labor, and Health, Education and Welfare established their own offices of policy analysis staffed by their own professional economists. Economics was recognized to be not a science like physics or chemistry; plausible economic arguments could be advanced on both sides of most issues since, with no recourse to laboratory experiments, the evidence was most often inconclusive. There were now professional counterweights to the Council of Economic Advisors. To complicate the situation even more, the role of CEA was further reduced by the creation of a Council on Wage and Price Stability within the Executive Office of the President; its special responsibility was to deal with inflation issues. Because there are so few economic issues that do not affect inflation, and almost none that are not affected by it, this involved a substantial sharing of authority with an agency that had not even existed in an earlier period. The Domestic Policy Staff, which had once served as a broker between the different agencies, the economic advisors, and the political advisors, was expanded in the Carter Administration to become still another independent center of policy initiatives.

As a result, on economic issues, the President today is confronted with a minimum of five and often as many as ten sources of expert advice. With neither the mechanism nor the incentive for forcing a consensus, he is often compelled to choose between sharply divergent views. Yet, no advisor feels personally responsible, nor is it possible to hold him accountable for the outcome of a decision; he can always argue, and very plausibly, that the resulting overall policy was certainly not his own.

In establishing individual agencies with responsibilities that touch on economic policy, the Congress has often given them very narrow mandates. If, in addition, each agency is directed by a strong representation of the specific interest group concerned with its activities, it is extremely difficult to establish a system of priorities to guide the resolution of conflicts that are certain to develop. In effect, economic policymaking has been opened up to permit the participation of a much larger number of viewpoints, but without any mechanisms to compromise or reconcile the views that are represented.

This organizational fragmentation is not inherent to government; a President is of course free to establish his own structures for policy advice. Still, it is not easy at a time like the present to disregard the demands of various interest groups who are very sensitive to the consequences of such decisions and insist on being represented. The process can be particularly confusing when a President is not driven by any overriding economic philosophy of his own but approaches each issue with an open-minded willingness to hear all sides and to do the best thing in every case. When economic policy is explored beyond the level of simple preconceptions, the decisions are most frequently entangled in complex tradeoffs and uncertain consequences; when these cannot be resolved, what is likely to emerge is a stream of seemingly endless contradictory decisions that lack any sort of common theme or any orderly sense of policy priorities.

It would be a great mistake to view the recent history of economic policy as one in which the policy process developed a coordinated economic program

with well-thought-out priorities and contingency plans for the President's consideration. Nor has the process been able to provide him with accurate forecasts of the consequences of his decisions. It more frequently resembles a cacophony of contradictory recommendations, thereby widening rather than narrowing the range of options before the President. It is in that sense a very accurate reflection of the community of "expert economic opinion" and the public at large.

Finally, the process of policy formulation within the executive branch has been made more difficult by a decline in the quality and experience of the staff on which the President can draw. Except in areas such as the military and the foreign service, there has been a steady expansion of political appointees into the lower levels of government. They are often inexperienced and chosen for reasons other than professional expertise—they are campaign supporters or representatives of specific interests crucial to the President's election. While some may function adequately, no continuity is developed since they normally leave after only a few years. The result is a lack of experience and historical perspective in both policymaking and in its implementation. Moreover, short-term appointees often have little incentive to develop their agencies into strong ongoing institutions. This alienates some of the best career civil servants. Some leave; others, fearing the future implications of identification with the current administration, avoid responsibility and participate very little in the process of formulating policy options. The trend toward inexperience feeds on itself as each successive administration bemoans the lack of talent in the civil service and turns increasingly to outside appointments.

Executive-Congressional Relations

It has always been difficult to achieve cooperation between the executive and congressional branches of government. Today, however, the degree of deadlock between the President and Congress appears greater than ever; the prospects for cooperation have never seemed more dismal. In part, this is a consequence of the controversial character of the issues they face. But, in addition, certain of the more significant institutional changes that have taken place raise the question of whether the system can be made to work even with a change of personnel.¹

Congress is organized to criticize, to respond, not to lead or initiate. Traditionally, the President has framed the broad outlines of policy and has initiated the required legislation to implement these large purposes. Congress today is more assertive of its prerogatives, less willing to accept the leadership of the executive branch. At the same time, the President's ability to impose his views upon them has been severely curtailed.

This is explained partly by the decline in the role of political parties. In earlier years the President's position as head of his party provided him with a basic bloc of congressional votes that he knew he could count on for the support of his programs. The importance of the party both in controlling nominations and in promoting candidates provided a form of discipline for those who were ambitious for higher office. With the development of open primaries, independent voting, and media advertising, however, the party has become little more than a label of convenience. Because every political campaign has need of a

substantial number of committed fanatics willing to work long hours canvassing for their candidate, the special-interest groups have become the surrogate for the political party. They are the reservoir of talent and commitment, and they have replaced the party as the sponsors to whom the politician owes allegiance. Political representatives have always had a certain indebtedness to those who supported them in elections, but such individuals and groups are far more numerous today. Given these circumstances, the President has lost a primary means for exerting influence over members of Congress.

Still, the President could try to operate with the congressional leadership or with committee chairmen to work out compromise schemes that would gain wide acceptance. The reforms of the Congress in recent years have reduced the authority of such leaders; they cannot speak for the members. This fragmentation of power within Congress itself parallels in certain respects the splintering of the policymaking process that has gone on in the executive branch. In combination with the reduced leverage that the President is able to exert as head of his party, it greatly complicates the process of policy formulation and implementation. Also, the emphasis on re-establishing congressional prerogatives has stimulated growth in the congressional oversight function, vastly increasing the size of the staffs called on to perform these duties. It is often the case that there is a stronger bond between individual agencies and their respective congressional oversight committees than between these same agencies and the Executive Office of the President.

The public expects the President to provide leadership in his relations with Congress and are intolerant of excuses when he fails. Yet, the institutional changes of recent years have made the old methods of exerting such leadership ineffective; it is not at all clear what new methods can succeed when Congress is organized into some 535 independent power centers.

Public Consensus

Given its mix of ethnic, racial, and social groups, the United States has always been a heterogeneous society. Consensus and social compacts were never deemed essential so long as economic growth provided a means of avoiding the burdensome task of deciding to take less when others received more. Inflation served almost as a lubricant, reducing friction and conflicts between social groups. Promises could be made to everyone; inflation scaled the real gains back to the available supply; it had the additional advantage of appearing to be an impersonal process. Much of the post-war American inflation had this characteristic of seeming to reflect conflict over relative income payments rather than over excess demand for products. For a very long time the combination of real growth and a low but steady rate of inflation was a relatively successful means of avoiding direct and open conflict.

After nearly a decade of strong economic expansion, economic growth became something that was taken almost for granted; public attention in the late 1960s was turned principally toward the problems of managing an affluent society. Discussion of public policy focused on such matters as distribution of income; environmental damage and the other external costs of an industrial society; equal employment opportunities; consumer protection; and arguments

over whether or not the public sector was too small. If concerns were voiced about energy policy, for example, these principally focused on issues such as the favorable tax treatment accorded a few by the oil depletion allowance. These may be properly labelled as the luxury concerns of a developed economy; still, they are issues that develop their own particular constituencies and generate their own pressures on public policy.

In the 1970s the basic precondition for the public policy focus on such issues—namely, that the problem of sustained economic growth was solved and would take care of itself—began to weaken; today, it is wholly missing. The trend of productivity growth has not been sustained; industrial capacity is not adequate to employ the expanded labor force of the 1970s; we are again concerned with supply shortages both in energy and in other basic commodities. Yet, the concerns and interest groups that developed in the earlier years cannot be disregarded. If the business executive of the 1960s concentrated primarily on reducing his costs and expanding his markets, in 1980 he is concerned with assuring his energy supplies, foreseeing the next shift in government economic policy, sustaining some contact with a vast array of new regulatory agencies, meeting his equal employment targets, and obtaining effective trade restrictions on his foreign competition. One explanation for the decline in productivity growth may simply be that the typical business manager has so little time to consider the matter. Economic policy must be formulated and implemented today against the backdrop of a much more fragmented range of public concerns and interests.

The public's reaction to changes in its economic status has evolved from an acceptance of the rules of the market to insistence on a certain political interference with the market. In the past, individuals were prepared to accept career failure as part of the breaks of the game; such failure today is blamed on Washington, Japan, or a lack of equal opportunity. The market, often for good reason, is rejected; some concept of equity is advanced as a better standard. Thus, if one does not do well in the economic arena, the common reaction is to press for changes in the political arena, hoping to alter the rules governing economic competition. Those who have done well under the existing system imagine that all such efforts to change the rules are an outrage; those who have not fared well believe that reforms have been delayed for too long. The result, in any event, has been a blurring of the distinction between the economic arena with its concern for efficiency and the political arena with its emphasis on equity.

Despite all such difficulties, the reaching of a consensus on economic policy is more imperative today than ever before. In the early 1960s even the illusion of consensus was enough since the basic policy prescription held out the promise of more for everyone. In the current situation, however, all the different conflicting policy proposals have one thing in common: they guarantee that a significant group in society is likely to suffer losses for a considerable period. Yet, if these groups do not accept the judgment, they will certainly intervene in the political arena to change the rules. In other words, without a consensus about who will be required to make the sacrifices, no policy can be sustained for a period long enough to have any chance for success.

This is a problem particularly for the traditional economic policy of demand management. All such policies are guided by the need to create a pool of unem-

ployed sufficient for the threat of lost sales or lost jobs to exert an adequate restraint on wages and prices. Economists have engaged in long technical debate over the required size of that pool if price stability is to be maintained. But if the unemployed refuse to accept such a role, if they press for compensation and will be satisfied only when there is no economic penalty for not working, they will pose no threat to the employed. In these conditions, the employed will also press for rule changes that will protect them from external competition. The repeated use of fiscal-monetary restraint may very well combine with increased awareness of the arbitrariness of all rules of economic competition to force an evolution of the system toward increasing both the rates of inflation and the incidence of unemployment.

In many respects the economic situation of the United States today resembles that of the United Kingdom in the 1950s and 1960s, though the reasons for the condition are not the same. As the United States looks toward the future, the economic prospect is bleak: rising inflation and declining standards of living. As with cancer, the choice of remedies is a painful one—surgery, chemotherapy, or both, and even then no guarantee of success. The temptation at such times to turn toward laetrile-type solutions is overwhelming. Because the measures that must be taken are so traumatic and threatening to specific groups, the pressures are strong to adjourn the meeting until next year in the hope that the situation will improve by then.

There is a growing consensus today within the United States about the seriousness of the economic problems. There is no agreement, however, about the solutions appropriate to these problems among those who formulate economic policy options, either in the Administration or in the Congress, or with the general public. If part of the problem lies with the judgments and decisions already made (one can, for example, ask who has been trying to form a consensus), the importance of the institutional barriers ought not to be underestimated. The economic and political system we have created may make the task of leadership virtually impossible.

Yet, an optimistic note may not be wholly inappropriate. American society has not yet evolved into one in which each person cares only for himself. The opinion polls continue to suggest a high degree of public concern for the nation's economic health, and there is growing awareness of the seriousness of these problems. Also, there seems to be evidence of impatience with the painless panaceas of election-year politics together with a recognition that certain short-term costs have to be accepted. The major ingredients for any program would seem to be two: reasonable probabilities of success and assurances that, if sacrifices are required, they will be generally shared.

REFERENCE

¹The discussion of this section is of necessity limited. These issues of changes in the political process are discussed at a more sophisticated level in an essay by James Sundquist entitled "The Crisis of Competence in Government" in *Setting National Priorities* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1980), pp. 531-563.

HANS H. LANDSBERG

Let's All Play Energy Policy!

The nation's Republican governors declared yesterday that there is no energy shortage in America and that bungling of the issue by Democrats threatens to destroy our country.

—A.P. dispatch,
Washington Post 2/26/80

The energy problem is so serious that it requires the creation in the U.S. of a new social contract. A new social contract would, in my view, mean an agreement in which the different parts of the country, the different social classes and races, express a new understanding of the manner in which they will live together and share the nation.

—Matthew Holden, Jr.,
Federal Energy Regulation
Commissioner, in speech to
Alabama Conference of Black
Mayors, cited in DOE's
"Energy Insider" 2/18/80

Energy policy involves very large social and political components that are much less understood than the technical factors. . . . There will remain an irreducible element of conflicting values and political interests that cannot be resolved except in the political arena.

—National Academy of
Sciences, Committee on
Nuclear and Alternative
Energy Systems, 1979

Americans are bombarded with conflicting views and statements from numerous self-proclaimed energy experts. . . . Consider the *sources* of the loudest anti-nuclear noise. Among those leading the attack . . . are a host of actors and activists, rock stars, aspiring politicians and others who think America has grown enough. . . . One wonders what they are *for*, and how they propose meeting America's energy needs? For many of these people, stopping nuclear power is but one part of a political objective to slow growth across the board in America.

—From an advertisement by
America's Electric Energy
Companies 1980

IF ONE WERE TO JUDGE the response of the nation to what is commonly called "the energy crisis" by the number of bills that have emerged from Capitol Hill, the number of committees that have dealt with them, or the number of legislative hours spent on their deliberation, one would have to call it superb. A whole array of newsletters and services has sprung into existence just to communicate and interpret legislative activity, and that only at the federal level. More of the same is found at the state and municipal levels, and in civic organizations of all sorts, not to mention the media. We have run the gamut from Nixon's Project Independence to Carter's moral equivalent of war, with, no doubt, as they say in television, "much more to come." Among the more important pieces: the 55-mile per hour speed limit; the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (meager as it is); the mandatory fuel efficiency standards for new automobiles; several, so far largely abortive, attempts at forcing electric utilities to convert existing plants from oil or gas, or both, to coal, and a more successful effort under which utilities can no longer build *new* oil-burning or gas-burning power plants; mandatory climate control ceilings in public buildings; energy efficiency labeling for appliances; tax credits to energy consumers for reducing energy use in specified ways; the recently proposed establishment of building energy performance standards (BEPS) by the federal government, designed to be adopted by the states and enforced in as yet unspecified ways; and, most important, the ongoing decontrol of natural gas and crude oil prices and, as of March 1980, the windfall profits tax legislation.

Is this a bountiful harvest for a six-year effort? Or is this a poor show? Neither number of bills nor their labels, however grandiose, can tell the story. Results do. Thus the 55-mile per hour speed limit is effective at 60 plus—which is not bad. The new domestic automobiles are progressively more efficient, even though evidence is accumulating that the cars on the road do not, by and large, live up to the official test results announced annually by the Environmental Protection Agency; but we are obviously moving in the right direction, both in performance and, of more importance, in attitude. Radical chic now is to drive a 35-miles per gallon compact. Good! In 1979, high price notwithstanding, just over one of five cars sold in this country was imported, because domestic car manufacturers had insufficient competitive products to offer. Bad! But that will change. (Some trend-wise people say that the appearance in 1979 of GM's x-car line will prove to have been the real turning point. Maybe.)

Decontrol of oil and gas prices—designed to reduce the desire of consumers to purchase, and increase that of producers to explore for and produce oil and gas—is too recent to permit a judgment; but there is no reason it should not have both desired effects. We shall return to some less attractive secondary consequences of decontrol below.

Other policies have been less effective. The Strategic Petroleum Reserve contains less than the equivalent of one week's nationwide oil consumption, and until quite recently the storage areas lacked equipment for withdrawing the oil (leading at least one wit to define the program as transferring oil from a hole from which you can extract it to one from which you can't). Mandated conversion of oil-burning and gas-burning electric utilities to the use of coal has been rare. Every plant ordered to do so has fought back by citing exemptions provided in the legislation: that it was economically destructive, that a change-

over would violate local environmental controls, and so on. Since 1974, when the first legislation was passed, out of not quite 500,000 megawatts of fossil-fuel-burning electric generating capacity, not quite 15,000 were targeted for conversion to coal. As of the end of 1979 orders with immediate effect had been placed for less than 500, and only three power plants had, in fact, converted to coal, under prodding of, but not truly compelled by, a government mandate; one wonders whether there have ever been less successful laws. Of course, Washington telling the electric utilities in 1977 and 1978 to abandon natural gas only to exhort them to return to it in 1979, when the market was easy, has not helped to allay feelings of uncertainty regarding what the government has next in store. As of early 1980 a new round is starting, this time using federal subsidies as the carrot, the stick having miserably failed.

Tax relief for those who have insulated their attics or walls, or both, installed clock thermostats, or otherwise made their homes more energy efficient may have motivated some marginal installers, but one wonders whether the relatively small federal contribution could have provided a substantial impetus. Before long we shall no doubt have some studies on the subject.

When it comes to counting the effects in published statistics, one begins to see the cumulative effect of the price revolution that began in 1974, but measured against what needs to be accomplished, the results are still meager. Table 1 shows the slowdown—since 1970—in the rate of energy consumption in its crudest form, the ratio of the aggregate of all forms of energy consumed to the aggregate of all goods and services produced, with the effects of inflation on the latter eliminated. The tabulation reveals that the country is on a slimming down path. Not spectacular or unprecedented, but steady. One trouble is that the decline in that ratio began too soon—not in 1974, but in 1971, suggesting that policy efforts put in place after 1973 may have less to do with the decline than we would like to believe. Undeniably, however, things *are* moving in the right direction as far as aggregate energy use is concerned, but much less so for the crucial component, petroleum. Indeed, as shown in Table 2, after a short pause

Table. 1. U.S. Energy Consumption and GNP, 1970-1979

	GNP (Billion 1972 Dollars)	Energy Consumption (Quadrillion Btu)	Thousand Btu per \$GNP
1970	1075.3	67.1	62.4
1971	1107.5	68.7	62.0
1972	1171.1	71.9	61.4
1973	1235.0	74.6	60.4
1974	1217.8	72.8	59.7
1975	1202.3	70.7	58.8
1976	1273.0	74.5	58.5
1977	1340.5	76.6	57.1
1978	1399.2	78.4	56.1
1979	1431.7	78.2	54.6

Source: *Monthly Energy Review*, U.S. Department of Energy, various issues; *Annual Report to Congress*, vol. 2, Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of Energy, 1979.

in 1974 and 1975, and despite the legislative effort, petroleum consumption continued to rise and reached a high of 9 percent above the 1973 level in 1978. Petroleum imports rose much faster than total petroleum use, to more than 40 percent above the 1973 level in 1977; and worst of all, the role of the Arab members of OPEC rose most steeply of all: from a share of 31 percent of U.S. imports from OPEC to 55 percent in 1979 (Table 3). Yet it is the dependence on imported, and especially Persian Gulf, oil that is at the center of the energy problem—in this country, in most of Western Europe, in Japan, and, in varying degrees, in the developing countries. In those terms, policy has so far failed abysmally. This is not the place to analyze the reasons, but control of domestic oil prices and the associated allocation scheme, which in effect taxed users of domestic oil and used the proceeds to cheapen (subsidize) imported oil, had a great deal to do with keeping imports from declining. So had the various obstacles to increased use of coal and the rapid decline in the buildup of nuclear power capacity. Imported oil represented the one fuel source that, at a price, could be purchased to meet demand. And purchased it was, especially from its most abundant source: the countries around the Persian Gulf, though non-Gulf producers Libya and Nigeria became favorite sources for the United States, as the very light crude they produce is ideally suited for U.S. refineries that strive to convert the largest feasible portion of the crude barrel to gasoline.

On the whole, then, are we in this country better off than we were in 1974? Better off in terms of reduced rate of growth in energy consumption altogether? Better off in reduced oil consumption? Better off in reduced dependence on oil imports? Better off in a reduced share of oil imports from OPEC and OAPEC countries?

The answer is mixed. Yes, the rate of growth in energy consumption has slowed down, and it has done so largely by using each unit of energy more efficiently. The rate of growth in oil consumption also has slowed down, but not much. And that is where the good news ends. Until 1978 oil imports rose rapid-

Table 2. U.S. Petroleum Consumption, 1973–1979

	Total	Imports		
		From All Sources	From OPEC	From OAPEC
		(thousand barrels/day)		
1973	17,308	6,256	2,993	915
1974	16,653	6,112	3,280	753
1975	16,322	6,056	3,601	1,383
1976	17,461	7,313	5,066	2,424
1977	18,431	8,787	6,193	3,182
1978	18,847	8,202	5,751	2,963
1979	18,373	8,136	5,479	3,015

Source: *Monthly Energy Review*, U.S. Department of Energy, various issues.

Table 3. U.S. Petroleum Import Shares, 1973-1979

	Total Imports as % of Consumption	OPEC as % of Total Imports	Imports from OAPEC as % of Imports from OPEC
1973	36.1	47.8	30.6
1974	36.8	53.7	22.9
1975	37.1	59.5	38.4
1976	41.9	69.3	47.8
1977	47.7	70.5	51.4
1978	43.5	70.1	51.5
1979	44.3	67.3	55.0

Source: Table 2.

ly, and so did the share coming from OAPEC and OPEC. In that context we are more vulnerable now than we were in 1973. Today import interruptions would represent a more severe problem than they did then; the remedies would hurt more.

Could policies have been instituted that would have produced better results? If so, why were they not put in place? Leading the list of policies not applied early on is decontrol of oil and gas prices. My second candidate would be a different air pollution control strategy; and my third a more aggressive and, at the same time, more forthcoming stance on nuclear energy—forthcoming in the sense of a franker exposition of risks and hazards, though always in a context of comparison with the risks associated with alternative energy sources. At least through mid-1979 these thrusts were at best in their infancy and of little significance in the writing of national energy policy.

What accounts for the phenomenon of unceasing excited talk about “the energy crisis” and the dire consequences depicted as sure to accompany the pursuit of business-as-usual; the agonizing process of passing even the most innocuous piece of legislation; and the sluggish and long-delayed advance in the direction of reduced oil imports? In a sense, and paradoxically, the key is that President Carter made energy policy his first priority. Firm orders given to James Schlesinger, his energy adviser, were to have a “national energy plan” ready for early April 1977. It was then that he elevated the solution of the nation’s energy problem to the “moral equivalent of war.” Goals were set that have long since been forgotten and abandoned; but the 103-page pamphlet that contained the plan and announced, over the President’s signature, that “the changes the Plan recommends will mean a new direction in American life” quickly became the focus for a battle that occupied the nation and the Congress for the greater part of Carter’s first two years in the White House.

One can argue that had the President instead chosen the health problem, the urban problem, or the welfare problem, the debate would have been similarly protracted and bitter, and legislation no more productive of results. Perhaps so. Perhaps the country was sufficiently fragmented that divergent perceptions and

aspirations would have produced similar confrontations no matter what the immediate focus. But it can also be argued, and I would do so, that the energy problem offered an especially rich area for the clash of opposing opinions. Indeed, I would contend that often the energy problem, or a specific dimension of it, provided for many participants merely a convenient opportunity or pretext for the propagation and pursuit of a much more deeply held *Weltanschauung*.

Energy was tailor-made to provide the arena; and especially so in this country. Because America moves largely by automobile and some of our biggest cities are built around private transportation, availability and cost of petroleum touch everybody, albeit not equally. Low-cost energy has long been a policy goal, and consumers have rationally responded to low prices by liberally substituting energy for other expenditures (such as double-glazed windows or insulated attics or wearing heavier clothing indoors). The dispensers of energy are large corporations, commonly enmeshed in antitrust and antibigness issues. With the emergence, or perhaps more accurately put, the recognition, of environmental problems, energy moved into the limelight of just about all situations in which the local, national, and global environment was put at risk; moreover, the birthmark of the newest energy source, nuclear, was the bomb. Though the exact ratio of energy consumption to economic output varies from country to country and is subject to significant reduction over time, still energy consumption and growth are positively correlated; thus antigrowth sentiment is easily transformed into antienergy sentiment. These are among the factors that explain why the energy debate draws on motivations and objectives far beyond energy issues proper and that, in a sense, bedevil rather than illuminate the discussion. The following are major pieces of the puzzle.

- U.S. energy resources have been abundant. The country ranks among the three areas of the world richest in coal. Until recently it was also the richest in oil and natural gas, and it was the first to develop oil and natural gas on a lavish scale. Even in resource endowment to fuel the most recently developed energy source—nuclear—the country is well off. Energy has thus been had “for the asking,” its use been kept, for all practical purposes, free of taxation (even today, the federal tax on gasoline is only 4¢ a gallon, unchanged since 1960 and thus, if adjusted for the intervening inflation, close to zero!), and the role of cheap energy, especially liquid, has played a pervasive role in the physical buildup and development of the country. Thus, increases in cost and decreases in supply of energy touch a raw nerve and are fiercely resisted.

- Energy producers have long been the targets of popular hostility. “Big Oil” conjures up the robber barons of the early Standard Oil days and the abuses that led to the eventual breakup of the original Rockefeller empire; utilities and their holding companies recall the days of Samuel Insull, the widespread bankruptcies, and the emergence of the Holding Company Act; coal was branded with the antilabor stamp, the Harlan County bloodshed, and the company towns’ conditions of near-servitude, and in general carried the image of a brutal, backward segment of the U.S. economy; and for totally different reasons, of which more below, the nuclear industry enjoyed only the briefest honeymoon of popular approval. Ranging from mild dislike to strong hatred, the energy industries have earned a perfect score as objects of hostility.

- The rise of environmental concern, beginning in the mid-sixties, merely reinforced antienergy attitudes. It so happened that pollution was intimately linked to energy production (mining), transportation (tanker spills), conversion (power plant emissions and radioactive waste), and consumption (automobile exhausts, industrial pollutant emissions). To be sure, water pollution—the detergent foam on water courses and at the edges of stationary water sources—as well as pesticide pollution (damage to bird eggs from DDT) were among the early eye openers in the sequence of environmental awareness, but energy-triggered pollution soon became the more pervasive news, the massive source, the dominant focus.

- Energy producers are typically big. Oil companies are among the largest industrial enterprises. So are some of the utilities. Bigness is equally the hallmark of producers of major energy-using artifacts, for example, the automobile, the power plant. Having lain in relative stillness since the heyday of the trust-busting era, the recent revival of antibigness sentiment has found a natural target in much of the energy-associated business. Only the language has changed, not necessarily for the better: small producers are “beautiful,” and large profits are “obscene.”

- Heavy inroads on nonrenewable resources in World War II and again during the Korean War, the rapid recovery of Western Europe and Japan in the fifties and sixties, and the prospect of a whole new world—the developing countries—that would soon exert heavy demands on the world’s resources reawakened concern for the rapid depletion of the world’s resources. The result was the “limits to growth” syndrome at the turn of the last decade. Energy sources became prime objects of that concern.

- Sheer population and income growth, resulting in ever-worsening congestion in already congested places, especially cities, and encroachment on former havens of solitude (parks, wilderness areas, hard-to-reach beaches, and so on) gave momentum and spiritual fervor to a new wave of antigrowth sentiment. As the preeminent engine of growth, energy became its proxy, and especially energy produced and controlled by large companies came in for its share of condemnation.

- Because the unattractive side effects of rapidly expanding technology could be seen or felt anywhere and at any time, technology as such became a target. The plastic wrapper, the jet noise, the ubiquitous transistor-powered radio, the snowmobile, the indiscriminating bug killer—they all seemed emanations of technology running riot. Again, most of these innovations rested on, were derived from, or were powered by, nonrenewable energy sources. Hence energy was a convenient stand-in for technology: hitting energy was likely to slow down, if not bring to a stop, the “careless technology,” and the call for “appropriate technology” was largely the expression of a more sophisticated yearning for finding alternatives to a basically disliked fact of life: modern technology.

- Since modern energy supply and demand patterns, and their external effects such as environmental pollution or nuclear safety, are no respecters of political boundaries, the role of the federal government has grown, a develop-

ment that has aroused state and local authorities, both of which jealously guard their rights. Moreover, the unequal distribution of energy sources has led to strong confrontations between states (and *mutatis mutandis* between nations). The interests of, say, New Hampshire, on the one hand, and, say, Texas, on the other, are diametrically opposed when it comes to production and price policies for energy sources. Western states like Montana and Wyoming resent playing the role of energy suppliers that bear the burden of land and water deterioration brought on by coal mining; Colorado objects to being a corridor for coal trains traversing it from north to south, with noise and dirt as the only reward for Coloradans. New England wants to see the price of oil and gas kept low; Texas and Louisiana want it raised. As a result, energy considerations have given rise to new regional lineups.

- Decades of living with low cost, abundant, reliable supplies of energy have given consumers a vested interest in their perpetuation. Yet costs have risen, at times steeply, and are bound to continue rising. Even in the context of general inflation, energy prices are generally singled out as the villain of the piece, and “consumerism” has fastened onto low energy prices as a major plank in its platform. And, to be sure, high prices have different impact: by size of income, location, occupation, and so on. Some indeed contend that the argument over pricing of energy is in reality an argument over income distribution. More of this below. But in its main thrust the resulting collision is not between factions (aren’t we all consumers?). Rather, it is a clash between short-term and long-term policies. Long-term policies call for adjustment of demand to inevitably higher costs and for encouragement of alternative energy sources, but both of these aims are bound to be blocked or retarded by the short-term resort to lower prices by which not only the pain of economic adjustment and the necessary task of assistance to those hardest hit can be avoided, but also the political penalties faced by elected legislators who must confront their constituents/consumers every other year.

- A large share of the energy used by the major energy-consuming nations is imported from the Middle East. It ranges from less than 20 percent in the United States to over 75 percent in some European countries and in Japan. Instability—political, social, and economic—characterizes Middle Eastern and some African oil exporters. As fear of interruptions in the flow of oil merges with considerations of general security, defense posture, and political and military alliances, especially in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict, energy issues become inextricably entwined with foreign and defense policy. Attempts to protect sources of oil supply are no different from protecting the importing countries themselves, and shrugging off relevant attempts as “protecting OPEC’s pipeline” misses the mark by a wide margin. What is being protected is the productive capacity of most of the industrialized world, which in turn is the final recourse, the ultimate resource, for the growth of the developing countries. But passions run hot and deep as the foreign policy dimension of energy joins those mentioned earlier. Yet even the best energy policy can never be a substitute for a good foreign policy.

It is in the complex framework of the set of energy connections that have been only sketchily outlined above that energy policy-making takes place in the United States. If one were to graphically represent the various interests, the result would be a criss-crossing of innumerable lines, diverging here, touching there, and largely traceable to origins lying far outside energy proper. There is hardly a single piece of legislation that does not carry the scars of the bruising contest between competing philosophies and perceptions.

Yet, all is by no means chaos or random events. On the whole, the beliefs that affect energy policy come in some major packages, and alliances can be both firm and logical. For example, antibigness, antitechnology, antigrowth, environmental primacy, consumerism, defense dovishness, and antifederalism usually come together; reversing the sign on each of these typifies its opposing package.

A striking example of the first was the coalition that sprang up in April 1978, primarily with the focus on preventing price decontrol. Headed by W. W. Winpisinger, president of the International Association of Machinists, its tent covered a large multitude of organizations; not just labor, but consumers, environmentalists, and so on. According to columnist David Broder, Winpisinger considered the energy issue a convenient tool for

bringing together a large number of diverse groups with common interest. . . . The hope of the prime movers in the coalition is that the diverse elements can be held together by their shared feeling . . . that "we're sick and tired of being hosed to death by the goddam multinational oil companies." The energy manifesto is carefully crafted to appeal to a variety of interests: consumers seeking low prices; conservationists opposed to nuclear policy; and unionists seeking jobs for the unskilled unemployed in solar energy installation projects or the retrofitting of buildings for energy conservation.¹

Other convergences match other sets of objectives. One brought about the defeat of federal legislation to accord the right of eminent domain to builders of coal slurry pipelines. Western state sentiment generally, the nation's railroads, the eastern coal industry and environmentalist opposition combined to block congressional passage: environmentalists, because they believed that western coal mining represents a threat to western land integrity (difficulties of revegetating strip-mined land in areas of low rainfall); western water interests because they opposed export—via pipelines—of water from arid western to water-rich eastern or southern regions; eastern coal interests because they fear low-sulfur, low-cost surface-mined western coal receiving a competitive boost from pipeline transportation; and railroads, for obvious competitive reasons. The net result of this lineup, helped by the fact that three West Virginians—Senator Robert Byrd, Senator Jennings Randolph, and Representative Harley Staggers—held key positions in the Congress, led to a setback for cost-efficient coal transportation and made it easier for coal-carrying railroads to boost their coal rates, ironically to the point where South African—and in the future, perhaps Australian—coal can be brought to some Gulf Coast locations at lower cost than coal shipped by rail from the Northern Plains.

The interesting point here is that each party to the conflict had a valid view. Nobody acted capriciously: not the railroads, not the environmentalists, not the western water interests. The railroads need bigger resources to either rehabilitate or expand their capacity if the doubling of coal consumption that is generally expected to occur sometime during the next two decades—some believe as early as 1990—is to occur. Keeping pipelines out and boosting rates for captive shippers such as coal consumers is the way to go; raising rates for other customers would simply drive them to competing freight carriers. The accusation that the railroads, assisted by the regulatory agency that screens their rates—the Interstate Commerce Commission—are exploiting the nation's energy problem for their own gains has the ring of plausibility, until one realizes the awesome task that lies ahead for this severely ailing segment of our economy: raising coal-carrying capacity by several hundred million tons in the next ten to twenty years. Indeed, each year now the nation's transportation system is asked to carry more coal than it has ever carried in the past, including the peak coal consumption years of World War II. And utilities have a point, too. Falling in line with national policy to expand the use of coal, they find higher rail rates a new obstacle that raises their cost and further aggravates their customers.

This particular situation no doubt lends itself to resolution. Though encumbered with regulatory rigidities, it is basically susceptible to some variety of horse trading. This is not true for a large number of other energy-associated conflicts. Perhaps the most persistent and complex one derives from the simple fact that, as noted, high and rising costs of energy affect different parts of the population differently. This unpleasant but inescapable truth has for years stood in the way of lifting controls from the price of domestic oil and natural gas; yet letting these prices rise would be an efficient way of depressing demand, stimulating supply, and, especially, making it feasible for new forms or sources of energy to begin competing. But opposition to lifting controls—imposed on gas by a Supreme Court decision of 1954 that gave the Federal Power Commission rate-setting authority at the wellhead, and in the case of oil, the last residual of the Nixon Administration's experiment in wage-and-price control—has always been fierce. Even though expenditure for all forms of energy (other than energy embedded in nonenergy products) represents only 6 to 7 percent of total consumer expenditures, the fact that the revenues do not go to a large, amorphous, poorly visible multitude of suppliers—such as in, say, clothing or furniture—but to a small set of highly visible giant corporations turns rising prices into a contest of principle: “they” and “us,” consumers versus producers. Added to this is the circumstance that the world price of oil is set by a cartellike foreign entity, OPEC, and is obviously way above the cost of production. To many, that makes the price unreal; ergo, it should not influence domestic price policy. Cheap energy for all rather than aid to the needy has been the response.

Without going into the niceties of scarcity cost versus cost of production, the plain fact is that the value of goods that the importing country needs to surrender to acquire an additional barrel of OPEC oil is real; it matters not whether that cost arises from competition, is set by a monopolist, or is the reflection of scarcity. Clearly, it would be preferable to surrender that bundle of goods and services to a domestic rather than a foreign producer, but keeping the price of domestic below that of imported crude has prevented that outcome. Indeed, by

instituting an equalizing system—under which refiners who use a larger percentage of imported oil in their operation than does the refining industry as a whole (and thus pay a higher average price) are compensated by those who use a smaller percentage—public policy has managed to tax domestic crude and subsidize imports.

But for six years the need to prevent that situation was not powerful enough to overcome the image of inequity or unfairness associated with price decontrol and the consequent shift in income from consumers to producers. Only in mid-1979 was the oil decontrol process finally set in motion. Regional and occupational conflicts added to the complexity of the problem; the high-energy-cost Northeast versus the low-energy-cost Southwest; Texas and Louisiana versus Massachusetts and Maine; urban areas, some with mass transit, versus rural areas, with inescapable and sole reliance on the automobile; inner city dwellers versus commuting suburbanites; farmers versus the rest of the country; the elderly; the handicapped; blacks (furnishing the Reverend Jesse Jackson's justification for a special black interest in the Palestinian problem, as blacks living in poorly constructed homes and driving energy-inefficient automobiles, would be the first and the hardest hit by higher oil prices resulting from Middle East conflict and would also bear the brunt of any military action fought over oil).

Regional conflict was aggravated by eastern unwillingness to help out in the intensified search for oil and gas. The strong tide, partly environmental and often merely parochial, that slowed offshore exploration in the Atlantic, as well as the building of new eastern refineries, led to the famous Texas bumper stickers "Let the bastards freeze in the dark."

That price decontrol has been initiated in the presence of such controversy and deeply held convictions is remarkable. A contributing factor, at least in the highly visible matter of oil pricing, was the fact that in order to retain controls, Congress would have had to vote down the President's decision, something it was not prepared to do. Yet decontrol will not be complete until September 1981 in the case of oil, and 1985 in the case of gas. Continued steep price increases or election of procontrol candidates in November 1980 could revive the spirits of the control-minded; and, of course, a turn to general price controls would make separate action on the energy front unnecessary.

Next to the equity issue, in which energy policy has been the battleground on which income and welfare goals, or, if one wishes, efficiency and equity, have been the contenders, environmental consequences of production and use of energy have led to the most bitter and protracted clashes. The examples are both numerous and well known. They touch every current source that contributes a significant share of energy. In coal, the impacts range from water pollution and land subsidence in underground mining, to land despoliation by surface mining, to impaired human health, damage to fauna and flora from acid rain, and the many and varied forms of deterioration suffered by buildings, painted surfaces, and monuments by airborne pollutants. Finally, there looms ahead in the more distant future the potential hazard of major adverse modifications of the globe's climate.

Oil, being a hydrocarbon, entails the same consequences in use as coal, though on a somewhat reduced scale. In addition, when burned in automobiles, it is responsible for emission of nitrogen oxide and hydrocarbons, the latter two

combining to make smog, and of carbon monoxide, which presents only a moderate hazard to the general public. On the production side, oil spills from offshore drilling and tanker accidents loom largest, threatening both ocean life and coastal zones.

Finally, the risks and hazards of nuclear energy range from nonroutine escapes of radioactive material and as yet unresolved management of radioactive wastes to deliberate diversion of highly enriched uranium or plutonium for the fabrication of explosive devices and weapons.

Since they play only a very small role in the current energy supply, new commercial sources or forms of energy so far have escaped the rigorous screening for environmental impact to which coal, oil, and nuclear have been subjected (gas is the least harmful in use, but it shares production hazards with oil, and when shipped in liquid form, represents a highly explosive substance). Nonetheless, high concentrations of solar energy can alter local weather by changing patterns of reflectivity; and materials used in the fabrication of equipment to capture solar energy have their own environmental problems (e.g., aluminum, chemicals, plastics, or fertilizers and pesticides in the case of biomass); but consequences of the severity associated with hydrocarbons and nuclear energy have not so far been discovered.

There is hardly a phase of energy policy in which energy and environmental objectives and aspirations, in the widest sense, have not clashed. At the moment, nuclear energy is at bay, trying to recover from the accident at Three Mile Island. Pronuclear forces suggest the event demonstrates that, since no injuries were sustained as a consequence of an admittedly major malfunction, reactors are in fact very solidly constructed artifacts: the antinuclear side stresses how soon and close we did come to a major disaster, despite all prior assurances that such grave irregularities were extremely rare. The jury, consisting primarily of utility executives who are the ones who must propose the next nuclear power project, is still out. But already the battle lines are forming over the anticipated government-driven expansion of the mining, transportation, and burning of coal, and especially western coal that is abundant, more commonly surface mined, and attractively low in sulfur. Unfortunately, it is located in a part of the country that is sparsely settled and generally poor in water, thus jealously regarded as land to be protected from industrial development, population influx, and especially water-depleting activities. Added complications are warnings by such states as Colorado that they will not let themselves be abused as transport corridors for the benefit of their northern neighbors, who profit from the sale of coal, and their southern neighbors, who profit from its use. Nor is the reviving war of the states held down by coal-producing states levying what are in effect export fees but go by the name of severance taxes (30 percent ad valorem in Montana, for example) on coal leaving the state; this, incidentally, is most of the coal that Montana produces.

Insistence on states' rights has reached its highest development in the battle over disposal of waste from nuclear reactors. An activity long delayed, plagued with false starts and lapses on the part of the federal government, it is now on a timetable that demands early decisions so that action can follow within a decade at most. Technological options now exist that even some of the antinuclear

forces agree will provide a tolerable level of safety. The intensity of earlier contentions that buried nuclear wastes constituted an inadmissible and immoral hazard for future generations and that some major future societal discontinuity, during which all knowledge of such deposits is wiped out, could critically endanger the survival of the planet, has gradually abated. But its legacy is a sharp, albeit ill-defined, hostility to the presence of the waste material. "Not here" is the universal refrain.

Indeed, the nuclear waste problem has become the most convenient instrument for stopping the industry's expansion. No "demonstrated" safe disposal, no more power plants or operating licenses. Since "safe" disposal is impossible to demonstrate in any real sense of the word—given the fact that decay of some of the fission waste will take thousands, if not tens of thousands, of years—the demonstrated safety demand offers a direct route to the end of nuclear energy, yet on its face seems to be a perfectly reasonable request to make. So reasonable that several states have now adopted a policy of simply declaring their territory off limits to nuclear waste disposal. No Dumping signs are becoming more numerous, and so far, at least, the federal government has failed to argue that it has, or needs to have, preemptive power to direct the waste to be buried where it judges geological and other conditions to be optimal. Instead, the Administration has used somewhat murky language that accords the states participation in the site selection process but leaves it wide open whether or not it will impose its will and on what grounds it will do so, if indeed that is its intention.² Several bills in the Congress are grappling with the same issue, employing presidential decisions, vetoes, and overrides for safeguards.

The assertions of states' rights are finding parallels at much lower hierarchical levels. Indeed, the cry for "decentralized energy," first and most forcefully formulated by Amory Lovins, has strong kinship with Schumacher's "small is beautiful," the Club of Rome's "Limits to Growth," economist Ezra Mishan's lament over the costs of growth and his attempts to demonstrate the mistaken pursuit of scale economies, and a large variety of near-romantic notions of grassroots-communal organizations in which many problems of modern society will simply melt away. It is here that the energy battle is at its most intense, most diffuse, and most divisive. Strongly held philosophical and political convictions are the driving force; the energy future provides the arena; and differences in analysis and judgment are perceived as political ploys and weapons. Adversaries do not just hold different opinions, they must be in the pocket or pay of evil forces. Alliances formed on the basis of kindred judgments are seen as conspiracies, and invective flourishes. Even new interpretations of history arise. Barry Commoner, no less than Lovins, sees deep significance in the way in which society produces its energy, leading Commoner to find market-oriented capitalism as incapable of coping successfully with energy problems, and somehow equating solar energy with the good life, while Lovins's emphasis on decentralization has equally powerful political overtones in his stress on the distinction of the mutually incompatible soft and hard energy paths.

At the other end of the spectrum, the energy hardliners indiscriminately accuse critics of nuclear energy, coal-borne pollution, tanker spills, income inequities, and high oil company profits as not having their country's welfare at

heart, as being against "progress" in some undefined way, as promoting dissension and playing into the hands of "the enemy." And, at any rate, if it weren't for Jane Fonda . . .

Happily, there has been some degree of convergence in 1979. Above all, more efficient use of energy, or conservation if you wish, has come to be regarded by most as the most promising means of managing the energy problem in the short-run of five to ten years. Most other approaches will take more time. Opinions differ, however, both on how fast truly significant efficiency improvements can be expected and what means or mix of means should be used to bring them about (prices, standards, rationing, other regulations). Opinions also differ on whether we can afford to relax our efforts to enhance as rapidly as possibly the supply of energy, even if in the process of pushing supply options we might not be able to deal as effectively with distributing the resulting cost burden fairly throughout society and be as protective of the natural environment, including human health, as we would like. However, there are increasing attempts to organize carefully structured exchanges of views among contending parties, aimed at finding and enlarging common ground and constructing a common agenda. Whether these praiseworthy forays can effectively move the more massive interest groups toward compromise remains to be seen.

There is one more encouraging event. The recently passed windfall profits tax legislation may be interpreted as a return toward conventional log-rolling and horse-trading. This is not meant as a cynical observation. Rather, it is born of the suspicion that a multitude of high-minded minorities standing firm on principle spells frustration to the decision-making process. In the case of the windfall profits tax, once the inevitability of such a tax had been accepted by all concerned as the political *quid pro quo* for decontrol, the setting of the rate, the apportionment between the oil majors and the so-called independents (i.e., non-integrated producers), the numerous exemptions and modifications for producers at specified locations or of specified types of oil, and, on the other side of the ledger, the allocation of the anticipated revenues—all followed an ancient script of "something for everybody" and "Let's split the difference."

This is not a process distinguished by intellectual excellence or high moral purpose. It does have one advantage: it works. One way or another, to form a workable consensus, a willingness to moderate demand for adoption of one's entire agenda is the true task for the decade of the eighties. A hardening of attitudes by the many interest groups that have come to be active in the energy field, and perhaps the emergence of yet new ones, cannot be excluded. It would continue to make energy policy a difficult adventure, with high costs both for this country and, given our heavy weight as the globe's largest single energy consumer, for the rest of the world.

REFERENCES

¹David Broder, *Washington Post*, April 16, 1978.

²It is interesting to note that the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution (the so-called Flowers Report, after its chairman) wrote in 1976: "Nuclear power provides a dramatic focus for opposition in some countries to technological development and we have no doubt that some who attack it are primarily motivated by antipathy to the basic nature of industrial society, and see in nuclear power an opportunity to attack that society where it seems likely to be most vulnerable, in energy supply."

J. MYRON ATKIN

The Government in the Classroom¹

UNTIL THE 1960s, practicing teachers and school administrators in the United States were largely oblivious to the possibility that politicians and civil servants might determine how mathematics was to be taught, how twelve-year-olds were to be tested, or how instructional plans for individual children were to be developed. Now, however, governmental figures decide matters such as these and in addition determine the nature of conferences to be held between teachers and parents, the specific level of attainment to be expected of youngsters before receiving a high school diploma, and the precise composition of the governing board of a local teacher center. Furthermore, in most of these instances, it is the Congress making the rules, upsetting well over 150 years of constitutionally rooted practice that places responsibility for education policy at the level of the individual state.

Education in the United States has always been in the political spotlight, but the debates usually focused on levels of funding rather than on details of professional practice, and the arena has been local, not national: a bond issue would be put to the electorate in a given school district to decide whether to construct schools or raise teacher salaries; there were political considerations in key administrative appointments; a state legislature usually required that physical education and American history be taught. The teacher, however, within quite broad boundaries, could always group children in whichever way seemed best; could, in most places, select the most suitable textbooks and topics to be studied; could develop final examinations independently; and could determine the levels required for passing or failing.

I hope here to trace the rapidly accelerated involvement of government at all levels in education in the United States, and particularly the economic and political context that favored such a development. In these comments I will focus somewhat less on the precise features of the new initiatives than on the setting that made the actions seem natural. In the forefront I will try to place issues of curriculum and teaching, since my interest lies primarily in the classroom. Finally, I will suggest that, as power shifts from teacher to politician and civil servant, the new governmental assertiveness has effects in the classroom that are not always positive.

Our story starts about twenty-five years ago. Before the mid-1950s there was virtually no governmental effort at the national level in the United States

designed to influence curriculum. There was, however, a lively education debate that centered on curriculum, on the decades-old battle between professors in liberal arts colleges and professors in schools of education. This heated internecine conflict over who trains teachers and what they should learn had been in progress at least since the 1880s and 1890s, when education departments began to be established at universities; but although it was a commanding issue on most campuses, the ramifications in the nation's elementary and secondary schools were indirect and relatively subtle.

However, World War II, and particularly the development of the atom bomb, greatly strengthened both the self-confidence of university-based scholars and their political power. The development of the practical application of atomic energy was seen as a triumph of theoretical, intellectual effort and an achievement of professors. The fruits of research were seen by the American people, as never before, as having an impact on daily life. While the United States had been increasingly enamored of technology during the preceding decades, developments before the war were seen as resulting from inventiveness and industry rather than from science and theoretical inquiry. Edison and Ford had been the popular embodiments of American progress in the years preceding World War II.

With the Allied victory over Germany and Japan, Einstein became a cultural hero. This quintessential professor—pipe-smoking, unkempt, apparently unworldly—had developed, as an act of mind, the basis for defeating the Axis powers. People like him had worked intensely during the war to translate theory into an awesome weapon that had saved the world from enslavement. Professors captured the respect of the American public. Academic accomplishment for the first time was seen as crucial to the national survival. Professors and the importance of a university education received a boost that had never been seen before and perhaps will never be seen again. Higher education was to expand enormously with the help of the GI Bill. Indirectly, the focus on higher education emphasized the importance of education generally in achieving national aims, including elementary and secondary education.

One of the major results of these developments was the enhanced position of university-based scholars in influencing education policy. University professors had long been lamenting the quality of precollege education in the battles over teacher education policy. They had been saying for fifty years that students were arriving at the university with an education that was insufficient, inaccurate, or unimportant—sometimes all three. What the education system needed was more involvement by university professors in the creation of curriculum for the schools—more involvement, that is, by professors in the academic disciplines that constituted the high-school curriculum.

In this climate, in 1951, a project was initiated at the University of Illinois that, although it lacked government financial support initially, was to encompass virtually all the features to be found later in the most widely accepted and influential of the federal efforts in curriculum. Under the leadership of Max Beberman, a group was created at the University to influence the mathematics taught in high schools. It was called the University of Illinois Committee on School Mathematics, and it included professors from the Department of Mathematics and the College of Engineering, as well as Beberman, who was a mathe-

matics teacher at the campus's University High School and a professor of education.

UICSM professors analyzed secondary-school mathematics courses and concluded that they seldom included concepts developed after the year 1700 and almost never focused on the mathematical ideas professors considered important. At University High School, Beberman, an extraordinary teacher, demonstrated that a topic such as set theory could be taught effectively to secondary-school youngsters. Instructional materials for use by other teachers began to be developed. In 1952 a grant was received by UICSM from the Carnegie Corporation that served to involve even more mathematicians and to expand the number of schools in which the experimental books could be tried. The project began to receive national attention.

By the mid-1950s a group of professors at MIT and Harvard, under the leadership of Jerrold Zacharias, was forming to examine the secondary-school physics curriculum. Precisely the same criticism had been leveled here. The physics taught in high school did not reflect the topics considered of greatest importance by professors of physics. Rather, high-school physics textbooks emphasized how physical principles operated in everyday devices like refrigerators and automobile engines. In the Cambridge setting, Zacharias—involved in defense work during World War II, and emboldened by the potential successes of well-mobilized minds—attracted a group of outstanding physicists to work on high-school curriculum, several of whom also had been involved in weapons development.

In 1956 the six-year-old National Science Foundation, which in its charter had been given responsibility for improving the state of American science education as well as science, began to fund Zacharias's Physical Science Study Committee. The verve, motivation, optimism, and esprit of PSSC seemed to many observers to be reminiscent of the organization that developed the atom bomb. By this time Americans were convinced that great minds and plenty of money could do almost anything—even change the secondary-school curriculum.

It is no coincidence that these early and admired nationally oriented attempts to change the curriculum in the United States were in the fields of mathematics and science. These were the fields associated with success in the war effort and that for the American people represented increasingly an unqualified good. UICSM and the Zacharias group received considerable publicity in the nation's education press. There were feature stories in magazines like *Time*. The tenor of the publicity, as might be recalled or imagined, was that the outstanding scholars associated with these new projects were in the process of remedying extraordinary deficiencies in the existing education system. Indeed, they were about to "reform" the curriculum. The clear inference was that schools had been mismanaged, the curriculum was antiquated, and all this was, in an almost criminal fashion, depriving youngsters, and therefore society, of a rightful education. No one seemed to doubt that the "problems" were national in scope or that remedies required a national effort.

All this activity was fully in evidence and commanding considerable attention before Sputnik I was launched by the Soviet Union in October of 1957, an event that profoundly affected the scale, if not the character, of national effort in

curriculum. Of more importance for my argument, it created a climate that favored a shift of responsibility toward federal government. The defense of the United States suddenly seemed threatened. A sense of crisis permeated the nation. What should be done? The predicament seemed to be rooted in the level of intellectual accomplishment in the country. Professors were invited to comment, and they testified forcefully and credibly. They told the politicians that our national well-being depended on high-quality precollege science education as well as on university training. They said that major government effort should be directed toward the common schools.

Some of the most eloquent remarks were offered by Edward Teller. There is, said he, not only the need for highly trained scientists and engineers, but also for a general population that understands what these specialists do. Scientific work would not progress adequately without a supportive climate. He drew the analogy with sports in America. A relatively small number of people participate in professional athletics, yet the enterprise thrives because there are millions of fans. The country needs science "fans," he said. With such supporters, science and technology would prosper. The place to educate such people is in the common schools, and it is a national responsibility to do so.

The argument was persuasive. On the basis of such testimony and in a mood of urgency, the Congress passed the National Defense Education Act of 1958 that called for increased emphasis on science, mathematics, and foreign language in the elementary and secondary schools. Congress also increased the science education appropriations to the National Science Foundation to enable NSF to initiate efforts in chemistry, biology, mathematics, and earth sciences, as well as physics.

In retrospect, given the historic exclusion of the federal government from policy of the public schools and the constitutional basis for that exclusion, it seems startling that virtually no one raised objections at the time to the dramatic new role assumed by Washington. Quite the contrary. Such were the generally accepted views that the nation's defense is a paramount national concern and the schools an instrument for achieving a nationally defined purpose, that the new initiatives met with little but enthusiasm from legislators, teachers, school administrators, and the public at large. There was virtually no talk then about local or professional autonomy.

Further, though something of a side issue here, the new federal programs to influence curriculum in the schools were launched with little understanding of how schools change, and at the time there was not even much discussion of the subject. From the tactics employed, however, a clear picture emerges of some of the assumptions implicit in federal programs. First, it was believed that school administrators and teachers are infinitely pliable. Second, it was assumed that if programs that were considered sound were to be developed by authorities in science and mathematics, these programs would find their way into the schools. There was, in fact, some basis for both beliefs. Curriculum developers at the time thought they saw teachers using whatever materials were provided by commercial publishers with little attempt either to create their own programs or modify what had been provided. Furthermore, like everyone else, secondary-school teachers, particularly in science and mathematics, admired the achievements of scientists and mathematicians during the preceding fifteen years.

Many of these teachers identified with the university-based scientists and basked in the reflected glory. After Sputnik, they too were viewed by the general public as key figures in improving the defense posture of the United States.

Implicit in the curriculum development policy was the belief that the new curriculum developers had goals that not only were identical to those of the general population, but to the goals of high-school teachers and administrators as well. To the degree that such assumptions were well founded, and by and large they were, there was little questioning of the strategy chosen for curriculum change. The social climate favored developments of the type advocated by scientists and mathematicians to such a degree that the topic of mechanism for educational change seldom arose.

For completeness, perhaps it should be noted that there was one voice urging caution, but on grounds of feasibility, not legitimacy. James Conant, by then a former Harvard President but also a powerful figure in science policy, warned the National Science Foundation against moving into the elementary-school field. He felt that the elementary-school system was so large and diffuse an enterprise, the federal government would have little impact on practice. He noted that there were few teachers in the elementary schools who taught only science. The common pattern was for each teacher to take responsibility for all subjects. Though he recognized the importance of effective science teaching in the elementary school, he noted that there were about one million teachers (in 1959) at that level. The scale was significantly different for secondary-school teachers of science and mathematics, who numbered about 30,000. Furthermore, secondary-school teachers of science and mathematics represented a relatively permanent group. Elementary-school teachers, largely female then, constituted a rapidly shifting population. By some estimates at that time, there was a turnover of half the elementary-school teachers every three years. Conant argued that the effects on actual science teaching in the classroom of even a massive federal effort would be minimal. He was concerned also that a major program at the elementary-school level would detract from efforts to improve high-school teaching.

The prevailing view of the National Science Board, the governing body of NSF, and in the scientific community was that science and mathematics education should be improved with federal help beginning in the elementary-school grades. To overcome Conant's objections, NSF commissioned a study, conducted by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, of the feasibility of moving into elementary-school science. The AAAS conducted several regional conferences to which outstanding scientists and many public-school administrators were invited. The result was a recommendation that NSF become involved in the improvement of elementary-school science and mathematics.

Conant's objections served to delay the entry of the National Science Foundation into the elementary-school field by about one year. By the start of the 1960s two federal agencies, the National Science Foundation and the Office of Education, were strongly committed to modifying school curriculum nationally, and there was no longer a dissenting voice. Teachers, particularly science and mathematics teachers, welcomed the new federal interest; national attention was drawn to their centrality in addressing a major problem, improving the

country's space and defense posture. In many summers there were several hundred expense-paid institutes from which science and mathematics teachers could choose.

The early 1960s, the Kennedy years, reflected a high degree of consensus about national aims as well as a strong sense of optimism regarding the ability of government to modify social institutions. However, as the 1960s progressed, national priorities began to shift. Relatively rapidly, Americans turned their attention away from issues directly associated with the Cold War toward pressing domestic problems. In particular, the country was becoming increasingly sensitive to problems associated with racial friction and poverty. The space race still commanded interest, but domestic issues now dominated the political scene. Dramatic progress toward equality appeared desirable and feasible. Americans were talking about The Great Society, a nation characterized by health and welfare programs that would mitigate substantially the debilitating effects of poverty as the country moved toward racial justice.

Lyndon Johnson relished the attention to domestic issues, but his special interest was the schools. He wanted to be remembered as the "Education President." Consistent with his effort to emulate Franklin D. Roosevelt and improve the domestic lot of Americans, he devoted monumental personal effort to assure passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. A major feature of this legislation, Title I, established a "compensatory education" program to improve schooling in debilitated urban areas. It was thought that the country's worst problems were in the cities because of the influx of poor blacks from the rural South. Curriculum development was a part of this effort, and it was to affect virtually every metropolitan area in the country. Again, there seemed to be no question about the appropriateness of a federal role—this time not to strengthen the national defense but to fortify the equal protection provisions of the Fourteenth Amendment.

By the end of the Johnson presidency, then, there was major federal education effort directed toward two broad goals. One was to improve science and mathematics education with a view toward helping the nation meet its needs for highly skilled specialists. The programs to meet this goal were really a legacy of the Eisenhower years. The other was to raise educational achievement among groups whose life chances traditionally had not been promising. The nation seemed committed to progress in both quality and equality in education. The Congress was reflecting the national will, and within one short decade had moved forcefully into the education arena on a broad front.

With President Richard Nixon's first term came an increasing inclination to examine critically the results of social policy initiatives that had been launched during the preceding decade. The economy was turning sour. The costly and unpopular Vietnam War had forced Johnson not to seek reelection. Sharp conflict arose about government priorities. Nixon came to office ideologically committed to a reduced role for government in alleviating social problems, at a time when the buoyancy and optimism that had characterized social policy formulation just a few years earlier seemed to disappear. The national mood was turning toward self-criticism tinged, in the case of Vietnam, with guilt. Doubt about America's position during the Vietnam War began to spill over to sometimes excruciating examination of national policy in all areas.

As consensus about broad national purposes diminished, the United States moved gradually into a period in which special-interest groups became more prominent. During the 1970s, unlike the 1960s, government came to reflect not a negotiated national consensus but rather the ascendancy of special groups. Of course, special-interest groups have always been a feature of the American scene, but their effectiveness at any time depends on the sense of national purpose. The 1970s came to be a decade where each group—and their number had increased manifold—advanced its own cause with little regard for the general welfare. Special-interest groups for the handicapped, for women, for minority ethnic groups, for homosexuals, and for the aged were just a few of those that moved to new, aggressive activity during this period. Organizations representing these interests were strengthened considerably by decisions of the courts that broadened the applicability of civil rights legislation and by legislatures that moved toward the same goal. The new power was used to influence the schools, particularly by groups committed to the advancement of the handicapped and ethnic and racial minorities. Paradoxically, while governmental initiatives were falling under a cloud and people were resisting government programs because they felt such programs were ineffective or unnecessarily intrusive, the same people often were trying to use government to advance their own causes.

The loss of national consensus was reflected by increased fragmentation within the education community. Policy came to be formulated less by those empowered to advance the welfare of the entire education system—school boards, for example—and more by groups representing various segments of the community, depending on their political power. The special-education group, as a particularly potent example, had long been tightly organized and politically sophisticated. The national organization, the Council for Exceptional Children, represents a constituency of special-education experts and parents of afflicted children. The CEC in the 1970s moved aggressively to influence both courts and legislatures to consider handicapped youngsters as a minority group entitled to the same types of protection accorded racial and ethnic minorities. CEC enjoyed many political successes, the clearest being the passage by the Congress in 1975 of the Education of All Handicapped Children Act.

Groups attempting to advance the political power of Spanish-speaking populations mounted programs to require bilingual instruction in the schools. The educational advantages of legislation passed in many states to provide for instruction in non-English languages for various minorities were less obvious than the political benefits derived by those who represented minority groups, but by this time it was becoming clearer that the schools had become an arena for some of the country's major struggles for political power. While there is a general expectation that the classroom effects of changes in education policy be beneficial, it is far from clear that an assessment of these effects plays a significant role in the decision for government to intervene in schools. Thus, increasingly, "reforms" are pressed on the schools to achieve some broad social purpose or to advance the ideology of a politically powerful minority. One might question the wisdom (or even the morality) of using children as the major group to address some of the country's most vexing social problems—such as racial friction and the presence of large non-English-speaking populations—but attempts to raise such issues are often viewed as evidence of a deplorable inclination to preserve

the status quo or even of racial prejudice. The fragility of many of our established social institutions is poorly understood, judging from the eagerness of many groups to press profound changes on the schools, and at a very rapid rate.

One way government becomes an influential participant in education-related decisions is by requiring that certain procedures be employed even if there is no direct suggestion about the curriculum to be used. The major rubric whereby the federal government becomes involved in such matters is to assure fairness for all groups under the civil rights provisions of various laws and the Constitution. For example, a key requirement of the Education of All Handicapped Children Act is that there be individual education plans for youngsters and that parents be involved in the formulation and approval of these plans. This law, intended by the Congress to assure that the rights of the handicapped are protected, represents one of the sharpest intrusions of the federal government into the details of teaching practice; the nature of the plan is specified in elaborate detail; each child must have his or her own plan. The role of the parent is central. Developing such a plan may reflect best practice and be eminently sensible, but one searches long and hard through the hearing record for even a hint that the requirement of an individual education plan of a particular type would represent a precedent-setting infringement, not only on professional autonomy but on state-held prerogatives as well.

This particular law reflects, perhaps, a culmination of sorts in specifying precise teacher behavior that may, in retrospect, be seen as an inevitable result of federal activity, particularly in a time of diminishing consensus. When everyone agrees on general goals and there is at least implicit confidence in the ability of teachers or any other professional, there is considerable latitude for the specialist, since it is assumed that he or she shares in the consensus. However, if consensus is in doubt, there is accompanying uncertainty about the values and practices that guide professional activity. Government becomes a major instrument in holding professionals to account in meeting goals and adhering to practices that are determined more overtly in the political arena.

Federal curriculum activities in the 1950s and 1960s seem to have cleared a path for a broad presence by the national government in education in the 1970s. In the early days of federal involvement, government action was seen as beneficial or at least benign. This was less so in the 1970s, but by this time few people were questioning the role of government in the schools. A particularly vociferous public outcry about federal activity in the curriculum field did signal the existence of potential problems in the mid-1970s. An NSF-supported curriculum project titled "Man—A Course of Study" (MACOS), with its anthropologically oriented descriptions of non-Western societies, seemed to some groups to challenge traditionally accepted values of family unity and sexual behavior. NSF activity in curriculum was slowed somewhat as a result of congressional objection. It was becoming clearer that federal involvement in curriculum could be controversial and that the issues were complex. However, there were few signs that government would get out of the classroom.

By the late 1970s, as public controversy about the purposes of schooling increased, it was difficult to reorient the terms of discussion to focus on the constitutional question of a legitimate federal role. Also, by this time schools were under extraordinary financial pressure. The 8 or 9 percent of the local

education budget provided by the federal government turned out not to be marginal but essential. School districts had learned to depend on federal money. While there are frequent and loud congressional as well as state-level protestations affirming the principle of local autonomy in education, as on the occasion of congressional debate surrounding establishment of the new Department of Education or in the MACOS furor, such rhetorical flourishes show little sign of leading to a diminution of the federal role in any aspect of education, including curriculum.

To this point, I have concentrated on the increasing role in education matters by government at the national level. However, at the same time that congressmen began to interest themselves in education policy, politicians at the state level were starting to flex their muscles, too. Although education policy is a major responsibility of the state legislature, until the 1970s considerable authority in fact had been delegated to local school boards, with the state determining only a broad policy framework. As confidence in the schools seemed to diminish, and as public expenditure for welfare and health programs began to increase markedly while the school population began to decline, state legislators began to interest themselves more in education affairs. The aim was to exert greater control over the schools, to bring them to account. Political figures, as others, were concerned about falling test scores, about teacher competency, and about efficient use of the dollar.

There were experiments with performance contracting, competency-based teacher education, legislatively mandated program evaluation, education vouchers, and, most recently, minimum competency testing. In addition, the state legislatures as well as the Congress began to respond to the pressures exerted by special interest groups to strengthen programs, for example, in vocational education, alcohol-abuse education, special education for handicapped children, education for the gifted, bilingual education, and education in the history of the various ethnic groups. Just as the Congress began to require special attention to various subpopulations, so, too, state legislatures began to do the same thing. At this writing there is a movement in California to amend the state law by requiring 200 minutes per week of instruction in the arts. If it is successful, a proposition will be put to the voters of California, and they will vote it up or down.

Increasingly, local school administrators and teachers are losing control over the curriculum as a result of government action. Minimum competency laws determine which fields are to be tested, and the curriculum is expected to reflect that political decision. Teachers and school administrators are told the techniques to be used, as I have indicated, in developing instructional programs for handicapped children. Vocational education and drug-abuse protection education are similarly mandated. In this process, the local administrator becomes less of an educational leader and more of a monitor of legislative intent. He or she must assure federal officials or the state education agency that requirements of the law are being met.

Many observers, correctly I think, ascribe these developments, in part, to the constrained economy. They draw a parallel between conditions today and those that prevailed in England after the Crimean War. Under Gladstone, the government, after a particularly unpopular war and in a tough economic period, invented "payment by results," with school inspectors used as prime agents for

governmental monitoring of the achievement of students. America, a century later, invented the accountability movement.

What *if* the government becomes an active participant in trying to enhance the capability of the schools in meeting their responsibilities? Are not education achievement levels thereby raised? Is there not then greater clarity in the education process? Perhaps so. Certainly, there is encouraging evidence that youngsters who traditionally have not benefitted from the schools are now acquiring literacy and computational skills that many of their older cousins never achieved. But there are other effects. As Matthew Arnold feared in Victorian England, programs that are not believed to be fundamental begin to atrophy. There is less of an attempt to teach all children about the sciences, for example. The minimum competency required becomes close to maximum because new resources are not channelled into the education system to meet the new set of responsibilities. Thus, while there is some increase in achievement, there is also a leveling down. Are standards raised best by imposing testing or inspection schemes from outside the classroom or by stressing the professional responsibility—and latitude—of the individual teacher? In the United States it has been assumed for decades that the correct answer lay in broadening the teacher's range of responsibilities. Now, with apparent disappointment in the accomplishments of the education system, the range for professional action is being narrowed, with individuals farther and farther from the classroom making basic decisions about curriculum. My guess about the effect on quality is that test scores of youngsters who usually have done poorly will go up, but the cost will be a considerable narrowing of the school curriculum plus a possible loss of opportunity for youngsters who traditionally have succeeded.

What are some additional effects? In the United States we are seeing the establishment of hundreds of new, often nonsectarian, privately supported schools. These institutions often are created as a reaction to government directives that require busing of public-school children to achieve racial integration and are a reflection of racial prejudice. But other schools are started by middle-class parents, black and white, who have begun to see the public schools as progressively less attentive to the needs of their own children, because the schools are required to respond to the demands of various special-interest groups and the minimum competency requirements without benefit of new resources. As a result of legislative directive, handicapped children increasingly are placed in regular classrooms, without additional resources provided for the teacher, forcing the teacher to redirect attention from "average" youngsters to the new group. As another example, judges frequently send delinquent children back to classrooms from which they had been excluded because they are extraordinarily disruptive. The courts act to protect the civil rights of the excluded children. But when many of these youngsters go back to the classroom, they continue to disrupt the regular educational activities and command disproportionate amounts of teacher time. There is little doubt that many of the new schools established by middle-class parents are a response to such developments.

These actions by government—both legislative and judicial branches—that place new demands on the schools (and at a very rapid rate) have been accompanied by strong tax-limitation initiatives. California's Proposition 13 will be

followed this year by Proposition 9, designed to cut state income tax by 50 percent. California often acts first and most thoughtlessly in the United States, but its programs are often precursors of others that will surface elsewhere. As a result of the combination of pressures on the schools, it is not unreasonable to suggest that we may be entering a period in which governmental services reduced to the bone will increasingly serve only the handicapped, the juvenile offender, and the poor. People with the means to do so will provide privately for themselves and their children, whether in education or in other areas, a possibility that becomes more and more a probability because family size is smaller and because increasingly both parents work. Thus, with greater income and fewer children to educate, if it has the desire to do so, a family can send its children to privately supported institutions. For the first time in the United States it is possible to conceive of the significant weakening of the common school concept which the nation has pioneered.

Continuing in a speculative vein, though somewhat less apocalyptically, government initiatives in curriculum may have contributed not only to a loss of teacher autonomy, but also to a narrowing of their range of technical as well as curricular responsibilities. New specialized roles were defined in government curriculum projects in the United States: text writer, subject-matter expert, test developer, classroom manager, program evaluator, curriculum planner. Before the curriculum "reform" movement, the teacher considered it part of his or her professional responsibility to assume each of these roles. To a significant degree, teachers designed a curriculum and, certainly, their teaching styles to suit their own sense of priorities and abilities. They often constructed their own tests; they worked with small groups and large ones; they played a strong counseling role; and they often devised their own equipment. Now each of these functions—perhaps necessarily—is deemed to require the skills of a specialist, and the teacher's responsibilities have tended to focus on didactics. Thus the government-supported curriculum movement, with its attendant proliferation of specialties, may have contributed to "deskilling" and "deprofessionalizing." Versatility is associated with autonomy; autonomy is unnecessary if the act of teaching is not seen as requiring skilled selections from a broad repertoire of possible actions. The craftlike elements of teaching are thereby emphasized, leading to a loss of opportunities for professional initiative.

Such developments are seldom the result of direct redefinition of a teacher's responsibilities (though they seem to be in the Education of All Handicapped Children Act). Rather, they are a side effect of an attempt to introduce greater precision and productivity in the classroom. Such a trend need not "deprofessionalize" a field, but if the tasks that remain for the professional are seen as largely mechanical and capable of mastery by virtually anyone, the image of the well-trained expert exercising sensitive and sophisticated judgment is severely damaged.

All this having been said, it must be emphasized that the specific effects of discrete government activities probably have been overwhelmed by other influences, primarily demographic, cultural, legal, political, and economic. It is difficult and unwise, of course, to try to seek simple or single causes for changes that are detected in schools. As just one example of a demographic shift that probably has had a strong influence on public attitudes toward schools that in

turn has led to a greater demand for explicitness and political attention, teachers became a dramatically younger group in the decade from 1960–70. There was a marked teacher shortage as schools expanded, and new graduates from teacher education institutions were hired in large numbers. Being younger, they reflected the attitudes of a younger cohort. They were more informal. They “dressed down.” They were “laid back.” They seemed to identify more strongly with students. This relatively rapid, large-scale change probably was disquieting to many parents because it suggested instability in what had seemed a solid institution. The new instability seemed to demand more systematic attention from authorities external to the schools.

It is possible to view two decades of increasing federal involvement in the schools as having produced relatively few of the intended changes in curriculum content. Teaching methods remain essentially similar to what they have been for decades; despite a strong attempt to change them. A few topics of study have been modified and modernized, and there probably is greater accuracy in the text materials produced for children. However, government activity has helped to alter both the perception of teaching held by professionals and the role to be played in determining education policy by the body politic. It is now acceptable for the Congress of the United States to specify the details of a teacher’s behavior, something unimaginable twenty years ago. While it probably would be an error to trace all this back to the first nationally based curriculum efforts alone, I have tried to establish the case that the curriculum activities—because they were uncontroversial in the early years and seemed so reasonable—helped to create a climate in which government intrusiveness seemed natural.

The federal presence in the classroom is now more controversial, but it is unlikely to diminish. Under the broad banner of improving national defense or protecting civil rights, the national government as well as state legislatures are likely to continue responding to special-interest groups, depending on their power, or, if it emerges, to national consensus about some issue that suddenly seems clear to the American public because of an unanticipated crisis.

In such a climate the teacher might be forgiven if he or she feels whipsawed, disaffected, and even resentful. Teachers, I think, have been highly desirous of responding to educational concerns featured in the mass media, and they see themselves as having tried earnestly and sometimes valiantly to meet the objectives that seem important at any single time for the schools; but as they became confused and angry because of the rapid change in educational priorities, their resistance to external influence stiffened. I believe that this resistance to external influence, however beneficial that influence potentially may be, has been one unanticipated result of government activity in the curriculum field.

There is little reason to think that government is not in the classroom to stay. Of course, few people would have predicted twenty years ago the degree to which government is involved in the classroom today, and it is doubtful that the future is any clearer now than it was then. But, now, as then, I doubt that it will be the professionals who make the major decisions about the appropriate role for government in education. It will be the politicians responding to pressures from the electorate and the courts—all against a background of economic decline.

We are ambivalent about our government. These days each presidential candidate seems to run against Washington and thereby strikes a deep, responsive chord in the body politic. At the same time government is used as a blunt instrument to advance one's own favorite cause. It is difficult to know what any one person can do, particularly in the United States where there is not a group of well-regarded individuals speaking out on education issues. Education administrators these days do not represent the profession in the United States. Indeed, their major preoccupation is survival, and they are usually in an adversary relationship with the teachers. Leaders of teachers unions are seen as self-serving. Professors do not command the attention they received twenty short years ago. Interestingly, there has been a noteworthy pattern in the United States of presidents of major universities interesting themselves in problems of elementary and secondary education. Conant was in a Harvard tradition when as President he began to speak about issues associated with elementary and secondary schools. However, there is little attention to schools from the intellectual community these days, and in my view the loss in terms of quality of education leadership is profound.

The education enterprise itself, then, is in a difficult position to formulate strategies to deal with undesirable changes. Perhaps here and there some people will try to broaden public discussion by highlighting what they see as the effects of the current trends for children and teachers. Possibly many of the consequences are not appealing to the public, and some of the specific initiatives may be altered or discarded. Teachers themselves, of course, have become a powerful special-interest group, though it is not clear that their power is being used with special skill or wisdom. Yet if, as seems certain, hard times continue, my guess is that the quality of public education will continue to slide perceptibly while the government strains to have an ever-greater role in stemming the decline.

The decline will perhaps have some foundation in the broad realm of professional practice, but the major influences will continue to be contextual: political, economic, demographic, and cultural. Government, however, in its impotence to deal with these broader issues, will focus with irritation and frustration on the schools. If this analysis of the last three decades has any validity, and if the future approximates recent experience, governmental attention—while it will improve certain conditions in the education system—is likely to contribute in direct, subtle, and unintended ways to a redefinition of schooling and professional practice that itself will lead, in my opinion at least, to further decline.

REFERENCE

¹ The work on which this publication is based was performed jointly with Ernest R. House pursuant to Contract No. NIE-P-79-0065 of the National Institute of Education. It does not, however, necessarily reflect the views of that agency. Major portions of this paper were presented as the Sir John Adams Lecture at the University of London Institute of Education on March 6, 1980.

ROBERT WOOD

The Disassembling of American Education

WE MUST BEGIN BY STIPULATING that American education today suffers from many of the more general national malaises that now afflict most of our institutions: there is an obvious loss of sense of mission and purpose; the sure confidence in a continuity from the past through the present to a certain future is gone; so, also, is the comprehensive, instinctive general support for established institutions. As other essays in this issue suggest, Americans, for almost a generation, have grown increasingly unsure of themselves, their governments, and the supportive institutions of family, church, and neighborhood that traditionally served to reinforce the individual personality. The atomistic impulse in our political tradition that Louis Hartz identified more than thirty years ago is now incontestably in the ascendancy. The concept of national character—of what it means to be an American—appears to have been effectively shattered by war and political turmoil.

Yet, if almost all institutions appear to suffer from distrust and disbelief, it is also true that those committed to teaching and learning seem especially vulnerable. Faith in education as the bedrock of what many thought to be an economically classless, politically free society was so early established and so widely shared for generation after generation that, once disillusion set in, the consequences were immediate and grave.

The vulnerability derives in part also from the way educational institutions are structured and deployed; there is such a great disparity between the separate and independent enterprises that comprise education that anything like a common defense has proved extraordinarily difficult to achieve. So long as the commitment to education as a “unique” function created to reward individual initiative and instill social beliefs was valued, it did not matter very much whether institutions organized themselves on a local basis, whether private as well as public enterprises were encouraged, or even whether consistent or rational links between the levels of education existed except through the agency of voluntary professional associations. By its intrinsic worth alone, education seemed guaranteed a top priority in almost every community.

Once the belief in education faltered, however, and schools and colleges were simultaneously persuaded to assume wholly new responsibilities, the characteristics of their structure became critically important. A once-strong substantive commitment to the broadest possible access to education through free

public schools and compulsory attendance was now pitted against a structural commitment to local autonomy, diversity, and pluralism. The private sector appeared in a new guise. The reconciliation of these now contradictory commitments may be the greatest challenge the educational community faces.

The Ideological Monolith

It is unnecessary to tarry very long on the tradition and universality of the unique function education was once thought to fulfill. From Boston's first school in 1635 to Jefferson's passionate advocacy of the worth of education, through the Northwest Ordinance, the proselytizing of Horace Mann, the Homestead Act, the G.I. Bill, and ending with James B. Conant's reassertion after the Second World War of the need for "an equal start in a competitive system," education enjoyed a favored claim on public resources, a special place in private philanthropy, and a privileged autonomy in both public and private governance. For three centuries, generations of Americans believed in the little red schoolhouse, the denominational college, the established university; motherhood and apple pie seemed scarcely more sacred. Although the schools were culture-bound, excluding minorities, immigrants, and women through long periods of the nation's history, fathers and mothers persisted in believing that their sons and ultimately their daughters would enjoy a better life than they had known through securing a better education.

The Structural Mosaic

Together with the esteem for learning went an unchallenged support for localism and autonomy, a commitment that caused American institutions of learning to be scattered geographically, responsive to quite different levels of government, and enjoying very different kinds of public and private support. Believing that such a pattern was good in itself, the American public generally ignored the wide disparities in the quality of teaching and learning, not to speak of the inequities of access. Graduates of Boston Latin were obviously more proficient than those who graduated from a small Vermont academy, but no one thought to denounce such conditions as either inequitable or unjust.

Conant spoke of—and defended—precisely this mosaic a generation ago:

When one tells a foreign visitor that we have tens of thousands of local school boards with vast powers over the elementary schools and high schools, he is apt to say, "This is not a system, but a chaos." To which I always reply, "But it works; most of us like it; and it appears to be as permanent a feature of our society as most of our political institutions." And, then, in the hope of giving him some glimpse of the reasons why such an arrangement has developed and why, in spite of its obvious drawbacks, it has so many friends, one falls back on history.¹

A more conscientious review of the nation's history may suggest, however, that the individual's place of birth, the location of his or her home, parental career choices (in a society conditioned to mobility), family income, and the character and intensity of religious belief were (and are) the fundamental determinants of American schooling. Localism remains the prime feature of ele-

mentary and secondary education—"plain education" as we choose to call it today. And, under the banner of pluralism and diversity, higher education in the United States remains a bewildering array of private research universities, land-grant public universities, state and private colleges, public community colleges, private junior colleges and specialized proprietary institutes.

During the years of early formal education, the child is caught firmly in the grip of localism, with only the private or parochial schools as an alternative to public schooling—all this being largely a function of family income or religion. The child is rooted in a particular school district—rural, village, town, borough, or city—determined largely by the accident of residence. Although state, and more recently, federal financial assistance provide some equalizing effect on the resources available to the local district, the fiscal margin for excellence is still largely determined by the local tax base. That base, in turn, is still overwhelmingly determined by the quality and location of households and jobs; it is, in short, shaped by the course of regional economic developments as they distribute themselves among some 88,000 local school districts that exist even today. Provincial institutions—"delivery systems" is the term favored at this time—are required to carry out national educational obligations.

Somewhat complicating this elementary and secondary school scene are the parochial and private secular schools. The early establishment of Catholic schools provoked bitter and ugly political controversies; these were ultimately converted into highly complex constitutional issues which touched on the separation of church and state. The access to public resources of many religious institutions is still unresolved in several critical respects, and private secular schools, particularly in the present climate of fiscal austerity, are not unwilling to advance similar claims. The parallel structure of public and private schooling has historically shown itself to be sluggish, not least in drawing attention to those who, in retrospect, were most acutely in need. Rural schools were generally inferior schools when the majority of Americans lived on the land as farmers. Immigrants were often neglected, even as their greatest waves reached the American shores; only the most tenacious of their children regularly attended schools. Today, the great city schools are generally left behind, while the suburban schools, by comparison, remain amply endowed.

As for higher education, until the twentieth century and the rise of the great public systems in the Midwest and California, the tradition was one of private pluralism. In contrast to the experience of most other countries, the American landscape is dotted with a great assortment of universities, colleges, and professional and technical schools, more than 2,000 at the latest count. American institutions of higher education, while generally exhibiting an impressive capacity for generativity and growth, were also vulnerable; their mortality figures have been noteworthy. As Martin Trow observes,² America had founded nine colleges by the time of the Revolution; England was content with two, Oxford and Cambridge. By the time of the Civil War, there were about 250 colleges in the states; of those, 180 survive today; 700 others had started and failed. In 1910, 1,000 American colleges taught a third of a million students; France in that same period had some 40,000 students in 16 universities.

Perhaps the principal reason for the continued fidelity to localism and plurality even as the thrust for universal access grew was the continued reliance on

professional voluntarism to maintain basic standards. At the turn of the twentieth century, Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia led the movement to develop professional associations and societies whose purpose would be to infuse teachers and scholars with a common philosophy. Through stated meetings, national conventions, and learned journals, common educational approaches would be formulated and these were expected to spread through the nation. Professional reform—in the classroom, in teacher training, in testing, and in new curricular experiment—was thought sufficient to habituate the various institutions of formal education to the new social and economic circumstances that were so much talked about.

The College Board was established to link the work of secondary-school guidance counsellors with college admissions officers. Conant's comprehensive high-school proposals, in the early 1950s, were expected to fulfill the needs of the exploding suburbs. So, in the aftermath of Sputnik, the new physics and the new math invented at M.I.T. and elsewhere were expected to win assent from high-school teachers across the country. Professionalism—parapolitical in character, but national in impact—was intended to perpetuate American pluralism; the faith would be kept. Covertly, however, it was hoped that a vast new array of purposes could be realized. There was increasing talk of the need for both equal and quality education, and many insisted that the country had always provided both.

The Decline of Faith and the Multiplication of Tasks

In recent decades, it has become increasingly difficult to demonstrate that both purposes are being achieved, or that there is no contradiction between them. With regard to the supposed economic benefits of education, there is a diminished confidence that there is in fact a strong correlation between diligence in school and success in work. There are many high-school graduates who, well-prepared or ill-prepared, go unemployed, and many college graduates find little fit between their major concentration and the careers they seek.

Psychologists and sociologists report that the young find little contentment either in school or out. Educational experts speak of the failure of schools to provide a "complete environment" and stress that school has expanded to fill time that other activities once occupied, without substituting for them. *Newsweek* sounded the ultimate cynical call five years ago with its cover story: "College, Who Needs It?"

More fundamental intellectual opposition has arisen as well. After studying the achievement records of ordinary school students and analyzing the correlation of IQ tests with race, class, and family background, one prominent social scientist after another has pronounced himself skeptical of the efficacy of education. In rapid succession, the works of James Coleman, Arthur Jenks, Richard Herrnstein, and Christopher Jencks suggested that even major changes in both the length and character of educational instruction seemed to have little effect on cognitive inequities. Their conclusion—a sad one—was that exposure to education did not much affect the outcome of a child's life.

At the same time as educators at all levels were being challenged, they were, paradoxically, asked to assume many new responsibilities. After handling the flood of children of the fifties and sixties, education, in the seventies, was asked

to cope also with the problems created by financial recession and economic dislocation. The shock waves produced by a baby boom had scarcely subsided when the dollar bust created its own problems. This happened in an educational environment in which faculty and administrators were still trying to accustom themselves to roles they had not even contemplated a few years earlier: they were now expected to serve as peace-keepers in the eye of the civil rights storms and the Vietnam agitations; to educate the intellectually and emotionally disadvantaged who had never before been considered capable of schooling; and, in the most recent period, to assure career access to all in a faltering economy and an unstable polity.

Educational institutions, almost alone at first, bore the full brunt of trying to implement affirmative action while containing the protests of students and others over Vietnam and other domestic and foreign disturbances. At the elementary and secondary level, the impact was felt principally in the judicial processes of desegregation. For a whole generation, first in the South, then in the West, and finally in the Northeast, district courts slowly, but forcibly, undertook to carry out the provisions of the decision on *Brown v. the Board of Education*. The local education agency, historically autonomous in its operations and politics, and generally staffed by an inbred profession habituated to other kinds of problems, found itself trying to cope with the most sensitive and incendiary of national conflicts. By design and custom both aloof from and inexperienced in the handling of such controversies, school boards and superintendents were suddenly embroiled in the fiercest of racial struggles. The battlegrounds were the schools and their individual classrooms. Especially for urban schools, seeking to absorb yet another tide of newcomers while grappling with the problems created by the exodus of industry and of middle-class whites, the tensions seemed overwhelming. No other institutions were required to bear such a weight of social change. Indeed, the turmoil and tensions served to produce a quite new literature: Kenneth Clark's *Dark Ghetto*, Jonathan Kozol's *Death at an Early Age*, and *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* are only the most prominent of a number of works that dealt with problems, specific instances of which were being shown on nightly television.

For higher education, it was the Vietnam War that sparked the violence, with campus protests, building seizures, and riots becoming almost daily events. The image of the tranquil campus was destroyed. Presidents, chancellors, and deans became almost as experienced as police commissioners in the management of open conflict. Faculties acquired new skills in negotiating differences and in mediating between angry students and beleaguered administrators. Colleagues who once perceived themselves as members of a common community found themselves divided into separate camps; they emerged as separate constituencies, insisting increasingly on particular rights and prerogatives.

Neither the teachers nor the professors had chosen their careers with a peace-keeping mission in mind. Their professional aspirations and expectations had been of a very different kind. They had to accustom themselves to the idea that they would have to establish and maintain an orderly and safe environment before they could think of teaching at all.

A second new responsibility that devolved on the schools was the acceptance of new categories of students that had never before been thought educable. At the elementary and secondary level, by state and federal legislative mandate,

students disadvantaged by physical, emotional, or mental handicaps who were determined by psychological and medical examination to be educable were invited to seek admission to schools. Children formerly placed in restraining institutions or closeted by their embarrassed families at home or elsewhere came to school, with the injunction that they be "mainstreamed" in regular classes just as soon as possible.

Simultaneously, as new waves of immigrants entered the country, demands for bilingual education became increasingly common. The Boston public schools, for example, are now teaching in nine languages; the ultimate objective is an equivalent proficiency in English and in the native tongue. With the explicit injunction to preserve an appreciation of each child's cultural heritage, the earlier ideological commitment to the "melting pot" tradition has been largely superseded. In retrospect, the older policies are seen to have propelled newcomers helter-skelter into the English language, often with great stress and no little trauma. A far more delicate balance of bilingual proficiency is now legally mandated; this meant that teachers, principals, and headmasters were required to develop new skills. Diagnostic teams and techniques never previously contemplated had to be introduced. Additional certifications for bilingual and special-needs teachers were suddenly required. Support classes and curricular experiments were called for. A new heterogeneity came to characterize the student population of many schools, which went substantially beyond the integration of blacks and whites that the courts had mandated; no longer could an inner-city teacher expect to meet a class largely homogeneous and roughly equal in its learning capacity.

For higher education, the process of adjustment was somewhat less stressful, since it dealt principally with the implementation of affirmative action and the accommodation of the civil rights legislation of the 1960s. But adjustments were called for on at least three fronts: admissions, curriculum, and faculty recruitment. These were intended principally to expand opportunities for blacks and other minorities; opportunities for consciousness-raising through curriculum reform were thought to be considerable. The adjustments came most easily and most rapidly in institutions whose financial positions were such that they could meet such obligations without great difficulty; sensing a certain guilt about their earlier records, some hastened to make amends. Black study programs appeared on campuses through the country, equal rights for women became a burning issue in athletics, and faculty appointments, now subject to governmental scrutiny for compliance with affirmative action plans, were less obviously in the control of small cliques of colleagues. If basic behavior patterns of the profession still prevailed, the long-run implications of the new procedures gave promise of considerable adjustment. The old-boy network that had dominated faculty recruitment and selection for generations was no longer unchallenged; the roles and missions of higher education, most particularly the utility and reasonableness of a liberal education, were now in question; and the traditional College Board tests for admission were contested, both by minorities and by consumer advocates.

A third new obligation imposed on education was the wholly unexpected requirement that it concern itself with the career futures of its graduates. Not so long ago, it was commonly assumed that a high-school degree offered the student the necessary credentials for college admission or employment, and that

a diverse body of colleges and universities, together with a healthy marketplace, would provide ample opportunities for all. Today, schools are increasingly expected to assure their graduates of placement in satisfactory career ladders. Occupational resource centers are asked to adjust themselves to the changing fortunes of the American economy—to take note, in particular, of the needs of the service sector and the arrival of computers and the other paraphernalia of the electronic media. Higher education is asked to shift from an overwhelming concern with the liberal arts to para-professional and professional training in schools of business and engineering, despite the rigidities that exist in the system and that make it impossible for resources, human and material, to be moved quickly. Guidance and placement counsellors are under pressure to “assure” jobs for all who have met the basic academic requirements. If graduates do not fit the perceived needs of the private and public sectors, education is said to have failed. Literacy, punctuality, acceptable work habits, compatibility of skills with rapidly changing industrial techniques are no longer thought to be obligations of the family or the individual; the educational institution is said to be responsible.

Cracks in the Structure

With belief in education on the wane and intellectual attacks about its effectiveness on the rise, with the educational establishment divided by level of instruction and institutional separation but required to take on wholly new responsibilities, it is small wonder that the structure shows signs of weakness. Soft organizations rarely, if ever, have the capacity to respond to hard problems and to change their ways quickly; inevitably, they become exposed to the intrusion of outside forces. For education, this intrusion has principally taken four forms.

Remedial Law

A quarter of a century ago, when the Supreme Court ruled on *Brown v. Board of Education*, remedial law as applied to schools and colleges was typically restricted to a small number of cease-and-desist injunctions and the award of limited damages. Plaintiffs and defendants were almost always private parties. Constitutional boundary lines as between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government seemed to be reasonably clear.

When the Supreme Court remanded the enforcement of the *Brown* decision back to the federal district courts, however, for the fashioning of individual desegregation plans, a new species of case made its appearance; with this new “public law litigation,” the parties involved were generally institutions and associations. Remedies now took the form of continuing judicial supervision, which involved systematic and complex organizational reform and affected long-established institutional practices and customs. Court oversight and court calendars came to replace the managerial authority and administrative timetables that had previously governed.

In the beginning, the judicially mandated plans in the South were relatively simple; they focused principally on student assignments and transportation. As the number of desegregation cases increased, however, both in the West and in

the North, the remedies became much more complex and considerably more detailed. In Boston, Denver, and Cleveland, for example, the courts provided monitoring arrangements, and not only supervised assignment and transportation plans but also drew up detailed educational programs.

Boston was, in certain respects, the most extreme example. Under great provocation by a then recalcitrant School Committee, the court proceeded to place one high school in receivership and hire a new headmaster; it established a completely new structure for parental involvement and ordered a new program for magnet schools; it oversaw school closings and the development of a new vocational education based on a unified facilities plan; it stipulated the number of advanced-standing classes and reviewed and approved the admissions to the examination schools; it established a quota for black teachers and administrators and ordered the reorganization and decentralization of the Department's administrative staff. Over 200 separate orders are now outstanding; each has to be taken into account when the Superintendent makes a decision or the School Committee votes. School districts elsewhere in the country operate under similar constraints, though few are as detailed or precise as those in Boston.

However constitutionally necessary or socially admirable the goals of remedial law may be, the intrusion of the courts on institutional operational capacity is in most instances devastating. Deadlines for student assignments are set at the pleasure of the courts' calendars and do not reflect the rhythm of the school year. Educational programs, introduced by court decree, do not incorporate the recommendations of curriculum committees and rarely show sufficient consideration for costs. Administrative appointments made through court-established procedures do not express the executive determinations of those whose professional concern with the schools is paramount. Little wonder that most of the superintendents in many of the nation's large cities today reach their decisions not on the basis of what is believed to be best for their students but as the result of their looking nervously over their shoulders and conjecturing mostly about "what the court will do next."

For higher education, the battlefield has been primarily one based on federal executive intrusion, rather than a judicial one—first with the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and now with the Department of Education. The administrative enforcement of the Civil Rights Acts and Executive Orders of the 1960s produced a voluminous series of detailed regulations affecting both minorities and women. Failure to comply with these regulations with satisfactory campus affirmative action plans could result in the withdrawal of federal grants and contracts which have now become absolutely vital sources of support in both private and public institutions. Higher education received its first shock in 1975, when HEW warned twenty-nine universities that \$65 million would be withheld if satisfactory plans were not drawn up. A "Berkeley model" produced a short-term compromise that seemed satisfactory; in 1980, federal warnings were out again, principally in North Carolina and Texas.

Throughout the fragmented educational structure, then, the major decisions of the courts—from *Brown* through *Bakke*, but also in less celebrated cases—have been enormously influential. Educational institutions, generally unable to develop a common front but relying instead on *ad hoc* coalitions that served to meet dire emergencies, have been compelled to rely largely on their own resources. With individual counsels of varying capabilities, almost literally at the

mercy of the legal profession, the institutions have had to find their own way. "It used to be," sighed a university president recently, "that I asked our faculty if we ought to undertake a particular program. Now, I ask our lawyer first."

Collective Bargaining

If the judicial presence has been a major external constraint, the rise of trade unionism in the educational profession has been another serious limitation on the capacity of institutions to set goals for themselves and to achieve them. Collective bargaining, common to some schools for a quarter of a century or more, but increasingly prevalent in higher education since 1970, particularly in the public sector, has had a dramatic effect on the character of institutional life. Associations originally established principally to exchange professional knowledge have been transformed into tough, cohesive bargaining units. The earlier timidity of teachers' unions is a thing of the past; they now heed strike calls across the country and come out to strike in the hundreds of thousands. In colleges and universities—where talk about salaries and the like was once thought to be indelicate, obviously unprofessional, with unionizing actions being almost unthinkable—more than one-eighth of all faculties and campuses now serve under a self-selected union seal.

The reasons why collective bargaining has come to flourish in academic communities is not difficult to discover: a studied neglect of comparative compensations and status relative to other professions, most particularly medicine and law, has existed from time immemorial. The psychic income of serving the young is not an asset that can be deposited in a savings account. Also, new and more ample opportunities for women prompted many to resist accepting an increasingly difficult work life on economic terms that were so obviously disadvantageous. Dwindling enrollments and fewer opportunities for professional advancement made job security an issue throughout the educational establishment. The extraordinary expansion of collective bargaining throughout the public sector added a dimension of respectability to what was already a powerful incentive to change.

Yet, understandable as unionism may be, it undoubtedly increases education's institutional vulnerability. It replaces the sense of community and common purpose that had once been typical with an adversarial posture; labor is made to appear the opponent of management. With each participant, the conflicting tugs of professional and unit loyalty come to the surface. Also, because the unions are by and large national in character while management is still overwhelmingly provincial, the advantage in professional collective bargaining negotiations generally lies with the employees; the institutional employers are often inexperienced and inexperienced in their responses. As union agreements are reached and as costs rise, public resentment, whether against increased taxes or higher tuitions, is bound to follow.

Parents

Conventional wisdom wishes to perpetuate the notion of a symbolic and close relationship between kindly, concerned teachers and grateful parents, from stable, enduring, tight-knit families, in a common adult commitment to the chil-

dren. The last quarter century has dealt harshly with any such romantic image. The traumatic migrations common to both black and white families, the increased appearance of the working mother, the spiraling divorce rate, and the disturbing rise in the statistics documenting child abuse have dispelled the classic American myth of the family, with its idealized conscientious, hard-working father, pure, kind, and good mother, and obedient and happy children. The reality, as Ken Keniston has demonstrated,³ is a substantial reduction in the functions of the family and a massive redefinition of the role of parents, together with significantly increased expectations for the legitimate needs of child care. Educational institutions are expected to provide the latter. Sarah Lightfoot entitled her study of parent-teacher relations *Worlds Apart*⁴; her purpose was to document the tensions and strife characteristic of the two parties now so heavily entrusted with the care of the young.

The reality for an increased number of the nation's children is that they come either from single-headed households or from homes where both parents work; in such homes, television replaces a fixed dinner hour and homework is not generally supervised. The other reality is that these and other parents also expect more from the schools, are quick to assign blame as they seek to displace their own guilt feelings, and feel thoroughly competent to judge most matters of curriculum and discipline. Comfortable and cozy PTA teas are an institution of the past; they are now replaced by parental advocacy groups and perpetual demands for community control. The peaceful atmosphere of parents' days on campuses are today frequently punctuated by complaints about costs, the absence of required courses, and a general laxity in moral standards. While educational institutions seek to abandon the doctrine of *in loco parentis*, parents seek to shift the responsibility and the blame to those whom they have entrusted with their children. No longer stout supporters of their children's schools, parents now figure as the loudest and sharpest critics of an educational system that they find wanting.

Interest Groups

A final reason for divisiveness in a once-settled universe is that we have seen the emergence of powerful interest groups for whom education is, quite obviously, a secondary concern. As schools, colleges, and universities have become immersed in broader controversies, new parties-in-interest have emerged, with priorities that are only tangentially concerned with the education of the young. Many of these look on educational institutions from a broader—and colder—perspective: they are, in their view, enterprises that possess substantial resources in funds and staffs, that exercise power and influence both in the community and in the nation, that can be infiltrated, directed, and put to use for other purposes—namely, their own. Three prime examples are evident today: the resolution (or non-resolution) of race conflict; the exploitation of educational resources to advance economic goals; and the use of educational facilities as practice fields for the cultivation of certain political skills, talents, and purposes.

On racism, the code words are two: forced busing and affirmative action. As court orders directing school desegregation multiplied, and as transportation

requirements became increasingly necessary, opposition to mandatory busing signalled a broader and more widespread protest from ethnic groups that were generally resistant to integration in any form. Because school busing was introduced originally for educational purposes in the rural school consolidation movement of half a century ago, and because it was extended to permit the creation of comprehensive high schools in low-density suburbs, it was not easy to attack it as a novel innovation in the educational experience of American children. Still, inner-city busing, tied as it was to desegregation, raised the spectre for embattled urban neighbors of open housing, the invasion by "outsiders" of close-knit neighborhoods, and the threat of job competition at a time of growing unemployment. The root cause of school segregation—housing segregation and the failure of the market to function effectively in strictly controlled and zoned suburbs—was rarely attacked. Instead, it was made to appear that inner-city school desegregation threatened the last freestanding "ethnically pure" neighborhoods—hence, the strident protests of those who would abandon their schools if their communities could remain intact.

The other side of the coin ought also to be recalled. The civil rights movements saw in increased access to educational institutions the promise of new careers for the children of minorities. There was also the hope of increased entry into teacher, administrative, and faculty ranks; status, security, and influence in the existing educational establishments seemed to be at hand. Vernon Jordan wrote that "the universities have proved as discriminatory as any other business and a good deal worse than many,"⁵ and the *New York Times* reported the overwhelming choice of blacks in graduate studies for advanced degrees in education.⁶ Clearly, educational institutions were being viewed as opportunities for the entry and advancement of blacks in professional careers. Issues of what ought to be taught and how youngsters ought to be prepared for meaningful careers were clearly much less important than the broader causes which many who felt deeply the moral and social injustices of racism were determined to uphold.

The economic concerns of the private business sector served in other ways to distort educational purposes. As technology transformed the American economy, business and industry became increasingly distressed by what too many chose to call "products" of education. The fundamental characteristics of the good worker seemed to be disappearing: punctuality, discipline, good appearance, and good manners were almost unknown; the new skills demanded in the electronics and energy fields were not generally provided; capable secretaries became virtually extinct; and computer programmers were in very short supply. Consequently, the private sector became increasingly concerned with school and college curricula.

At the secondary level, questions were raised about career-vocational education. There was an obvious need to transform the traditional offerings in wood-working, sheet metal, upholstery, and the like to new skill centers that emphasized health, electronics, retailing, and other activities that were obviously in the ascendancy. In higher education, there was increasing discussion of the need to curtail the liberal arts and to advance the professional schools of engineering and business. High technology councils across the country complained

that education was too little oriented toward their needs; as the economic civil war between Sunbelt and Snowbelt intensified, so also did the outside pressures on education.

It became easier for the radical economists to advance plausible arguments to show that education had more and more become the handmaiden of the economic system. Educators, forced to wrestle over whether or not their prime mission was to expand the horizons of the young and thereby increase their lifelong options or whether they ought to track them as soon as possible into readily available, urgently required jobs, found, with distressing frequency, that their consciences lost out to what was said to be the nation's pocketbook.

A third distortion of the traditional educational agenda was produced by political activists on their way up. As controversies grew over desegregation, affirmative action, productivity, and economic welfare, and as participation widened, the readiness to use educational institutions as training grounds for the new politics also increased. The community power struggle in New York City was fought first over control of the schools, even before the general reorganization and decentralization of that mammoth municipality became a real issue. Student governments on municipal campuses, formerly benign and inconsequential instruments for the distribution of student activity fees, suddenly became hot-beds of agitation. Originally noted for their protests against the Vietnam War, activists now devoted their attention to consumerism, feminism, and any number of such issues. Education itself became a political cause. The once-vaunted concept of "sanctuary"—indicating a place where free speech was guaranteed—tended to be violated as passions rose over which constituency would prevail in matters of resource allocation and in questions of educational reform. Political adventurism ran side by side with educational content.

These special agendas only served to distract even further a fragmented educational establishment already beset by too many external intrusions. How to cope with the courts, unions, and parents, and do all this in an atmosphere that was increasingly politicized? The earlier faith in the unique function of education and in the organizing principle of institutional autonomy was inevitably weakened. Faced with these external intrusions in addition to the overload of new tasks which they were expected to assume, educational institutions seemed both fragile and inadequate.

The Assault on Autonomy

Whenever institutions are perceived as uncertain about their values, confused and internally divided about their mission, and behaving in ways scarcely sanctioned by their traditions, they are open to attack. During the last decade, the assault on education in the United States has been increasing.

On one flank, the threat has been largely financial. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s costs have spiralled dramatically at all levels of education. For higher education alone, expenditures per student rose 58 percent in public institutions and 94 percent in private colleges and universities between 1960 and 1972. The strain on public funds was immense; there was a 443 percent increase in public subsidies while the GNP rose only 116 percent. Federal research funds remained fairly constant; federal outlays for construction were cut 90 percent. College

tuitions soared, doubling and tripling on the average, providing most institutions what little economic stability they were able to manage.

At the same time, both in local communities and in the states, voters refused to approve bond issues for public education. In December 1976 Toledo, Ohio, had the dubious distinction of being the first system to close its schools for lack of money; its 56,000 students were sent home. California, through its Proposition 13, decimated the local resources, drained the state coffers, and sent a message of taxpayer revolt through the whole country. School districts that formerly enjoyed legal priority as first claimant on public resources found themselves in direct competition with police, fire, health, and welfare services. Colleges and universities found themselves competing for corporate resources with outside research contractors. The long-established tradition of education having a special call on resources, public and private, vanished abruptly.

Simultaneously, government-mandated requirements forced new expenditures on the schools and colleges of the country. Court orders required new programs, new capital investments. Federal and state regulations insisted on new provisions for those with special needs and also for women. New forms of bilingual education were established and made mandatory by the courts. Previously sacrosanct formulas for legislative appropriations, governing class size and student space, were drastically reduced. Governors vetoed programs once thought to be untouchable. The fiscal foundations of that complex, localized, and pluralist system of education that had once been thought uniquely American, that permitted diversity and variety, were largely set aside in one short decade. Still, the legal requirements for new and additional expenditures remained.

On yet another flank, institutionalism itself was challenged. Beginning with higher education but continuing also at the elementary and secondary school level, the voucher movement gained surprising momentum. As a consequence of the growing disenchantment with educational performance, and also of bigotry and consumerism, serious proposals were made that parents and students become the adepts of Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham, and, as instant calculators of pleasure and pain, presume to have all the information necessary to make informed choices among both established and new educational enterprises, public and private. Even apart from the possibility of false advertising and hucksterism and the innumerable complications of accreditation and evaluation, the grim possibility arose that education would soon become another product in the marketplace, packaged and sold alongside of fast foods and cold drinks.

The attack at the center, however, was on the curriculum itself. Dissatisfied with educational performance, particularly as institutions undertook to cope with new kinds of students and provide new career paths, legislatures prescribed their own version of adequate education: competency testing. The issue of adequate achievement and performance was wrested from the hands of educators and made a matter of law. Court challenges, to date, have blunted the impact of competency legislation, but the assertion that the appropriate techniques of teaching and learning are not matters of professional determination but may be legislated is the most direct threat that education has yet had to endure.

This is coupled with the new truth-in-testing movement. In this instance, New York State has led the way, but both national and other state legislation is also pending. The proposition that the predictive aptitude examinations carefully constructed over many years are not only elitist, unfair to minorities, and excessively cognitive, but also rigged, inaccurately scored, and indiscriminately monitored is incomparably dangerous. The basic process by which achievement is measured and entrance into successive levels of education achieved is to be taken from the judgment and determination of a once proud profession and made a matter of litigation and lay dispute. A more serious educational hazard cannot be imagined.

A Dubious Future

What counsel is it possible to offer those who remain committed to the advancement of knowledge and its transmission to the young? The faith that sustained and motivated many of us—the belief that we had a unique role in the American democracy—is rapidly disappearing. The separate institutions we served are now besieged, thought by many to be vehicles for the resolution of conflicts that do not bear directly on our immediate tasks. The communities that we once cherished are now divided; their quarrels are more obvious than their agreements. Meanwhile, others outside wish to direct our destinies, shaping the nature of our calling.

What is to be done? Institutionally, education must regroup. It is no longer possible to indulge in the implausible proposition that strength resides in plurality, diversity, and localism. Nor is it possible to believe that voluntary professional associations are sufficient to bind institutions together. The need is to assign tasks, differentiate responsibilities, and strengthen the links between the various levels of instruction that are required to come together in major efforts at joint decision-making. Failing such unity, the next few years of declining enrollments, swollen costs, dwindling public confidence, and loss of face will surely see the basic functions of American education torn asunder and allocated to other general purposes in the public and private sectors.

One hopeful sign is the establishment, on a national level, of the new Department of Education, set free at last from the contradictory and competing demands of health and welfare. Another is the increase in the competence of state departments of education, empowered to allocate resources by equitable formulae for school aid both to cities and suburbs. A third, perhaps more tentative sign is the growing communication between the public and private sectors of education.

Here, real tradeoffs are possible: a united front for federal institutional aid to research universities could replace the competitive student-number formulae that now prevail. Public support at the state level could begin to nourish the quality private four-year colleges that now exist—it must be acknowledged that the public teachers colleges for the most part did not make a very successful transition to liberal arts status. Contrariwise, public community colleges could supplant many of the private junior colleges, spawned by the surge of applicants in the 1960s but quite insufficient to the problems of education today.

In short, we must think in terms of institutional resurgence, a recognition of common purpose rather than disciplinary ambition, and the need to replace the blind faith that previously and perhaps deservedly supported us before. As educators, we will all be required to accept new and strange disciplines: planning, budgeting, priorities, novel forms of collaborative arrangements. We must recognize, however, that neither at the level of primary, secondary, or higher education is it possible to go it alone, district by district, campus by campus. Otherwise, our institutions risk being dismembered, their functions reassigned to other corporations and agencies, with the high calling of education being made subservient to special purposes and special pleaders.

Attacks on institutions require an institutional response. Because educational institutions have historically been so divided, we have a better prospect than others of coming together, reasserting that the nation remains vitally dependent on what we know, what we learn, and what we teach our fellow Americans.

REFERENCES

- ¹James Bryant Conant, *The Child, The Parent and The State* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1959), p. 14.
- ²Martin Trow, Paper, Princeton Trustee Seminar on Higher Education, May 6, 1977.
- ³Kenneth Keniston and The Carnegie Council on Children, *All Our Children: The American Family Under Pressure* (New York and London: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1977).
- ⁴Sarah Lightfoot, *Worlds Apart* (New York: Basic Books, 1978).
- ⁵Vernon Jordan, "Blacks and Higher Education," *Daedalus* (Winter 1975), p. 160.
- ⁶*New York Times*, Education Section, April 20, 1980.

PATRICIA ALBJERG GRAHAM

Whither Equality of Educational Opportunity?

THE PUBLIC PURPOSE OF EDUCATION—why we should educate—is often elusive and difficult to define. However, rhetorical flourishes like “equality of educational opportunity” are a good indication of what the public purpose is at any given time; moreover, they frequently influence the practice of education.¹ While the relationship between actual educational practice and the educational policies that derive from the public purpose is also sometimes obscure, it is nonetheless possible to identify a connection between public statements about why we educate and the concrete school experience. For example, the child in a poverty-stricken community in rural Kentucky today has special reading and mathematics teachers because the rhetorical flourish “equality of educational opportunity” became embodied in Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, which provides federal money to school districts that have a sufficient number of children from families with low incomes to qualify for the funds for additional teachers. The combined effect of linking purpose, policy, and practice is also evident in the fact that in the United States children in the primary grades today are reading better than at any time in our history. The gains have been particularly strong for blacks in the Southeast.²

“Equality of educational opportunity” has been a dominant theme in discussions about purpose in education during much of the past twenty-five years. It was preceded by a pervasive commitment to “democracy in education,” and I believe that it is being succeeded by a sentiment currently expressed as “equity in education.” Each of these has a distinctive emphasis. My focus will be on the transition from the period when “equality of educational opportunity” characterized our national educational aspirations to the contemporary shift to “equity in education.”

The issues of educational purpose in a society are inextricably tied to the values the society holds for itself. Efforts by the educational system to change the values of the society by indoctrinating the young inevitably lead to difficulties or disasters if the educational system is at all successful in its task of inculcating divergent views. Typically, the educational system is unable to convince anyone of its alternative views, and it makes few efforts to try. Rather, it follows the canons of the society as carefully as it can, eschewing those topics on which no consensus exists. George Counts asked the question in 1933, a time of maximum concern about the viability of the democratic capitalist system in the

United States, "Dare the school build a new social order?" The answer was a resounding "No." Not only did it not dare to build a new social order; it knew that it had neither the strength nor the authority to do so.

Thus, shifts in expressions of educational purpose reflect not only views about education, but views about the society. By looking at what we have sought from our educational system, we can see what we have expected from our society.³

Equality of Educational Opportunity

The Brown decision in 1954 fundamentally changed the balance of power among those who determine educational purpose and policy. In its 1955 decision on compliance, the court, again unanimous, spoke to the varied local conditions and gave responsibility to the original courts that heard the cases. The court continued, "In fashioning and effectuating the decrees, the courts will be guided by equitable principles. Traditionally, equity has been characterized by a practical flexibility in shaping its remedies and by a facility for adjusting and reconciling public and private need. These cases call for the exercise of these traditional attributes of equity power."⁴ With these two cases, as well as with the many that followed them at the local, district, and appellate levels, the federal government began to play a major role in determining the purpose of education and how that purpose would be made manifest in practice.

At the time of the Brown decision in 1954 the budget of the U.S. Office of Education was less than \$300 million. Most of its activities centered around educational statistics, support to land-grant institutions, vocational education, assistance for school construction, and aid to school districts with many federally employed workers (Impact Aid). In the early 1960s the budget for the Office of Education had climbed to \$600 million and included funding of the National Defense Education Act provisions. Immediately after the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1965, the Office of Education budget topped one billion dollars. Its budget continued to grow as the needs of special categories of students—for example, college students, bilingual and handicapped persons, and the poor—were brought to the fore. In 1979 the budget for the Office of Education was \$11 billion.

Professional educators are accustomed to criticism, and though they might not like it, they recognize it as an occupational hazard. They were not accustomed, however, to having the federal government play a major role in elementary and secondary education, and many were not prepared for the emerging significance of the courts, the Congress, and then the Administration, including the U.S. Office of Education. From this federal galaxy came the rhetorical flourish of the sixties, "equality of educational opportunity." The Brown decision in 1954 had signaled its arrival, but the educational uncertainty of the following decade had left its future in some doubt.

Two books published during the decade 1955-1965 characterize the emerging, hesitant commitment to equality of opportunity. One of these, Michael Young's *The Rise of the Meritocracy*, published in Great Britain in 1958 and in the United States the following year, achieved a substantial following among American and British academics.⁵ A rigid meritocracy, Young observed, would elim-

inate many incumbents from high positions. Further, those persons who had not achieved positions of prominence would be stripped of the excuses they could now provide to explain their lowly situation. These speculations about the effects of meritocracy dampened the enthusiasm some of the current elite had for the notion. The social costs of a society based on merit could be high indeed.

A volume with a much more popular following, John Gardner's *Excellence* (1961), captured the national dilemma of the period in its subtitle, "Can We Be Equal and Excellent Too?"⁶ Gardner, a master at employing the simple phrase to delineate the complex issue, explained that the book was about excellence, but also about equality, "about the kinds of equality that can and must be honored, and the kinds that cannot be forced." "Such a book," he continued, "must raise some questions which Americans have shown little inclination to discuss rationally." (That portentous sentence presaged the discussion in the public and educational arenas of the next two decades.) Gardner continued, "What are the characteristic difficulties a democracy encounters in pursuing excellence? Is there a way out of these difficulties? How equal do we want to be? [That was fundamentally Young's question.] How equal *can* we be? What do we mean when we say, 'Let the best man win?' Can an equalitarian society tolerate winners?"

This statement by Gardner was widely read and discussed and contributed to the change in the public mind that permitted the new role of the federal government in education later in the decade. Gardner, himself, was Secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare from 1965 to 1968.

Lyndon Johnson, who came to the presidency following John F. Kennedy's assassination in November, 1963, as the first southern president since the Civil War, established his reputation as a successful leader of the United States principally on the basis of his domestic policy, particularly his contributions to civil rights and education. Following closely on the rhetorical stimulus of Kennedy, Johnson secured passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964, presided over the civil rights protest activities led by Martin Luther King, Jr., until his death in 1968, and gained passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1965. This very significant piece of legislation asserted the federal government's legitimate role in assisting state and local governments in providing supplementary aid to meet the special needs of those children who were not receiving adequate educational services. This bill authorized the federal government to take action directed toward ensuring equality of educational opportunity, and set the stage for the later shift to equity.

This enunciation of a federal priority for education marked a fundamental shift that has shaped educational developments in the United States since the mid-sixties. Determinants of educational priorities shifted. In previous years both rhetorical issues of purpose and operational issues of implementation were the concern of the professional educators. In the new era the federal government dominated. Then the individuals reaching educational decisions made up an amalgam of a few professional educators, some bureaucrats, but, most important, idealistic social scientists and lawyers who were committed to certain American ideals and believed that these ideals could be achieved through modifications of the educational system. Frequently young,

often trained in sociology, economics, or history, these tireless young men (and, occasionally, women) labored mightily with full conviction that theirs was a vital crusade. Thomas Jefferson had called his educational policy a crusade against ignorance. Theirs was a crusade against the specters of old-style bureaucracy, special interests in education, and conservatism. They worked in Washington, and they worked in their home communities on government contracts and grants, providing the data from which would be developed the policy documents that would bring about the millennium the liberal Democrats of the sixties sought and even believed might occur. They would make a "war on poverty" and establish an Office of Economic Opportunity, and their principal weapons in these battles would be money and the power of education. Victory was elusive.

The emphasis was on tangibles: access, money, facilities, special programs. Optimism ran high that the federal government would be able to achieve their worthy goals because it could control those tangibles; it had the resources (or so most thought) to provide the money and to require compliance for the access. These were the essential ingredients of the federal strategies of that era.

Another key element in the federal strategy was desegregation. The southern states, some northern communities, and a few northern cities were desegregating their schools. Here the access issue was clear: blacks and whites must have the opportunity to attend the same schools. The principal institution bringing about this desegregation was the federal court system, its efforts supplemented by the federal legislative and administrative branches. The Office of Civil Rights in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare determined whether the school district was in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and the Office of Education began to provide special funds to desegregating school districts under the Emergency School Assistance Act after its passage in 1972. The key to successful desegregation, however, was likely to be strong community leadership, which neither court orders nor federal funds could guarantee.

A second major element of the equality concern was school finance. There were great geographical variations in the amounts of funds available for costs of public schooling. These amounts were determined by state and local governments by various formulas, most of which were heavily influenced by the amount and value of taxable property in the district. Thus districts with little income from property taxes—which were often those with a large percentage of poor families—had less to spend on their schools than did districts with greater property tax income. The California state courts recognized this limitation on equality of opportunity in the *Serrano v. Priest* decision in 1971 and required a statewide reexamination of school finance to make it more equitable. Subsequently, approximately twenty-five other states revised their school finance provisions.

A third legal effort to bring about equality of opportunity concerned children for whom English was not the family language. This issue emerged in the *Lau v. Nichols* decision. In this California case the Supreme Court in 1974 determined that school districts receiving federal funds must provide means for children not fluent in English to acquire English fluency. This decision, which

did not specify *how* the schools were to make the youngsters fluent in English, moved the court's interest from mere access or opportunity to the process by which children would acquire skills. The Court did not mandate a particular process but did require a special program. The 1967 amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act included the Bilingual Education Act, which provided funds for the Office of Education to distribute to school districts with substantial numbers of students with "limited English-speaking ability."

Educators, unaccustomed to being either in the center of a growing, popular enterprise or in a financially prosperous venture, reveled in the additional funds and the services they bought. This infusion of federal funds, generally in areas that had not received them in the past, brought a prominence to educators that was new to them. Previously, educators' principal meetings outside the school were the local Kiwanis or Rotary clubs; now they traveled to Washington, dined on government-subsidized expense accounts, met with the federal officials at the U.S. Office of Education, conferred with congressional staffs. All this was quite different from life in Cedar Rapids. It was the unusual educator, basking in such rare beneficence, who would speak frankly to the enthusiastic, optimistic federal officials who believed that with this new help to the schools, great changes would come—who would tell him that the schools were unlikely to do what the society did not, in fact, want to happen. It was an extremely rare educator who would announce outside the privacy of his own living room that this faith in education, enunciated by the president and repeated by his followers, was unjustified. Relishing the first fruits of the affluence of modern America that many had ever seen, few would suggest that this faith in their institutions was misplaced. Many admitted privately that the schools were not likely to change the social order, but who wanted to say so when the government thought they might? That was the dilemma for professional educators of the sixties.

Their dilemma was resolved rather quickly when additional social scientists were called to the scene. The new methodology was "evaluation." Given the money that was being spent, the government must be "accountable," and if funds were to be continued, their effectiveness must be demonstrated. Predictably, as any sanguine educator knows, family and social class were better indicators of students' academic success than was any measure of school investment, including teachers' preparation or facilities in the school. Yet, this was a disconcerting finding. The first major public statement of this was James S. Coleman's study done for the U.S. Office of Education in 1966. When commenting on his study, which was widely interpreted as minimizing the role of the school in influencing students' educational achievement, Coleman wrote in the summer of 1966, "Schools are successful only insofar as they reduce the dependence of a child's opportunities upon his social origins."⁷

Where, then, was equality of educational opportunity to be achieved? Despite what the educators knew but were hesitant to admit, the federal government's policymakers bet on the public schools. Their knowledge of how schools actually worked was limited, but initially their faith was substantial.

Since the passage of Title I of ESEA in 1965, the federal government has provided \$23.2 billion through 1979 to local school districts. Although the early

regulations governing expenditures of those funds were somewhat unclear, gradually the federal government limited the purposes for which the funds could be spent. They were not to be used for general aid to the school district nor were they to provide services ordinarily paid for by state or local funds. These were extra funds, given to the district on the basis of the proportion of low-income families, to provide services at the school level for children who were doing badly academically. The law permitted the funds to be spent on children in grades one through twelve, but most districts concentrated their funds on primary grade pupils.

This emphasis on youngsters in the early grades coincided with the federal emphasis on the Head Start Program beginning in May, 1965, which received \$5.2 billion between 1965 and 1979. The hope was that children who got off to a good start could maintain such progress later in school. Like the Title I evaluations, initial reports were discouraging, but more recent, methodologically sophisticated longitudinal analyses have been more positive.⁸

The federal policymakers and some of their colleagues in state government acted on the assumption that additional money made available to school districts to provide extra educational services to needy children would improve the academic performance of these same youngsters. In the minds of the policymakers the principal institution to provide this educational remedy was unquestionably the school. The school authorities agreed; but soon the researchers in education were challenging that assumption for several reasons. Put crudely, the federal government was trying to buy improved academic performance, but it was not clear what commodity it was purchasing or what currency was legal tender in the transaction. The transformation of funds into improved student performance is a massively complex one, little understood by educators themselves (who frequently were not consulted on the matter), and even less understood by the officials who were providing the funds.

Not surprisingly, when academic performance did not improve, the result was a loss of faith in the schools. The government's strategy was based on two false premises: (1) the assumption that money can buy learning; and (2) the assumption that education by itself will bring upward social and economic mobility. Policymakers, educators, and the public accepted these assumptions, and the scapegoat became the school when the expected improvements did not occur.

Much of the criticism of the school was legitimate. When the new money began to pour in, few recognized that the influx of funds required fundamental changes in the assumptions held by school officials. For a variety of reasons, school officials traditionally made tacit assumptions about the attitudes, habits, and talents that children brought with them to the classroom. Generally, teachers believed that children from prosperous, stable families did better than those from poor, unstable families. There were always some exceptions to that general rule, but both research findings and conventional wisdom supported these beliefs about student achievement measured in the conventional ways—teacher-made tests, standardized tests, and course grades. The job of the teacher and the school was to move the children into the curriculum, which was also organized along these assumptions. This pattern is found not just in the United States but to a considerable degree in every other nation with a well-defined educational system. What was the school supposed to *do* to change it?

Beginning with Coleman in 1966, researchers, most of whom were trained in the use of quantitative methodologies, regularly reported the ineffectiveness of the school in altering the influence of family background on educational achievement. The predominant research methodologies of the day emphasized large-scale, aggregate analyses, and most of these reported unequivocally that the school was less influential than family factors in determining educational achievement. The work of other researchers, notably Christopher Jencks and his colleagues, also indicated that educational achievement alone did not reduce existing social and economic inequalities.⁹ These findings, widely reported in the press, alienated educators, confused policymakers, and generally depressed the public who read them.

But why such a fuss? Whoever believed that the school alone principally determined educational achievement or that educational achievement alone principally determined economic or social mobility? The problem seems to be that policymakers and educators together promised too much for their interventions, and in promising too much nearly lost public support for the vastly important, but more limited, role that the schools must play.

The profound public dissatisfaction with American education that surfaced in the seventies had several origins. The focus of the discontent was on the schools themselves, and the work of Coleman and Jencks served as a lightning rod for it. Their research findings, which the public, with the simplistic scientific understanding that many had, naively assumed were value-free, served to legitimize the common view that "schools today are no damn good."

Every time in this century that school enrollment patterns have shifted fundamentally we have had public outcry about the schools' deficiencies, although the criticisms and responses have varied. At the beginning of the century when immigrant children flocked into the public schools, progressive critics castigated those institutions for their palpable deficiencies. Subsequently, historians have also criticized them for their insensitivity to the immigrant children's circumstances and opportunities. In the midcentury, when the proportion of high-school graduates nearly doubled (rising from 33 to 65 percent of the adult population between 1947 and 1977), critics again decried the low academic standards. These critiques produced the post-Sputnik reforms that benefited chiefly the youngsters who were academically successful. Again, as we now begin for the first time to educate racial minorities as fully as we have educated middle-class whites, the schools are under attack for their inadequate performance. In the cities where the minorities are concentrated, funds are short, just as they were earlier in the century in the rural South when blacks were concentrated there.

Whenever the schools take on the task of educating "out groups"—those that the society has ostensibly, but perhaps reluctantly, asked them to educate—we find the schools severely criticized and public confidence in them diminished. The schools are the stage on which our implicit social dramas are made explicit, and the dramas are played to audiences that are sometimes filled with hostile critics. The schools are easier targets than the more abstract social goals they are implementing. Thus, in the last decade, when the schools followed the law by enrolling blacks with whites and by providing special services for the poor, the lack of social consensus for such equitable treatment became apparent and took the form of criticism of the schools.

Powerful as racism has been in our society, it alone does not explain the burgeoning public dissatisfaction with schools, especially public schools. Other elements, separate from the issues of racial minorities or the poor, were affecting both the perceptions and the performance of the public schools.

Even in areas where there were few, if any, poor or racial minorities, Americans who increasingly identified themselves as middle class complained about their public schools. These were the Americans who came to adulthood following World War II. For them the war had brought great social leavening; a large part of the working class moved up to the middle class. The war had also provided opportunities for the wealthy to mix with others than themselves, particularly when many returned to colleges whose enrollments included large numbers of veterans who attended under the G.I. Bill. In the view of many, the homogenization of American society—the movement to include the cream and the skim within one Vitamin D-enriched society—had been achieved. Although much of the explanation for the higher standard of living and the enlarged middle class came from the influence of the war and the spur to economic activity it provided, the public schools also—and deservedly—received much of the credit.

In the past decade middle-class support for public education has been severely threatened not only by the issues of race and poverty discussed earlier, but also by staggering losses of confidence in two distinct areas: government and the professions. Both groups have traditionally enjoyed the confidence of the middle class, particularly the members of the post-World War II middle class who came to adulthood when the government was fighting a principled war and won it. The cause, they believed, was just, and the American government triumphed. In that era, too, the doctor was accessible, and patients believed that he could cure them if they went to him in time. In short, middle-class Americans had confidence in the authorities.

The decade of the seventies brought a war in Vietnam in which Americans could find solace neither in its moral legitimacy nor in victory. The decade also brought us the spectacle of the executive branch of the federal government infested with venality and a president who behaved despicably and resigned rather than face the possibility of impeachment. Thus, there was a serious erosion of the belief that the federal government stood for what was right. Also extremely disconcerting was the difficulty of the federal government in translating ideas, even good ones, into action. That had always been a difficulty for large bureaucracies, as jokes about the WPA and World War II army food attest. But in large matters, like winning World War II, the federal government had triumphed. Now, in similarly large matters, like revitalizing cities, the evidence was considerably less persuasive that the government could act effectively.

The government had difficulty acting wisely and well even when it could rely on those whom David Halberstam called “the best and the brightest.” In the sixties faith in the best and brightest, defined less grandiosely as the professions, was great. In the introduction to the Fall 1963 issue of *Daedalus*, Kenneth S. Lynn observed, “Everywhere in American life, the professions are triumphant,” and concluded, “Thorstein Veblen’s sixty-year-old dream of a professionally run society has never been closer to realization.”¹⁰

Little more than a decade later many Americans were concerned that Veblen’s dream might, in fact, have come to pass, and they sought ways to curb the

professionally run society. Ralph Nader developed a major role as a consumer advocate challenging the beliefs and practices of professionals in such diverse fields as car safety and standardized tests. Physicians discovered that their patients, with the help of lawyers, were asserting their rights to know, to choose, and to be recompensed for medical mistakes.

The widespread loss of confidence in the government and in the professions coalesced in one set of social institutions run by both the government and professionals, the public schools. For many Americans, the public schools in the seventies came to symbolize the lack of moral leadership associated with the government, the unsubstantiated arrogance attributed to the professions, and the general ineffectiveness in delivery of services connected with both. In the wake of such devastating criticism, school leaders simply treaded water, unsure where to swim.

While the foregoing material has dealt with the past, the balance concerns the present and the future. An account of the past, while certainly susceptible to varied interpretations, has more elements of reality than does an analysis of the present or the future. Therefore, I move here from historian to commentator or even hopeful prophet, a dangerous change of posture. This, then, is the transition from "what was" to "what is" and "what ought to be."

Equity in Education

The most accurate description of current national purpose is uncertainty. But in the United States, even in a period of national uncertainty, a commitment to fairness persists. While it is a difficult time to forge dynamic new programs, it should not be difficult to articulate what fairness means in education. In this miasma of national purpose, fairness in education means not merely equality of educational opportunity or mere access, for we have seen the limitations of that; rather, it means equity in education. Access and equal educational opportunity are necessary preconditions for equity. The issue, however, is what happens to the student once he or she has had access or opportunity. Access to what, opportunity for what?

Equity differentiates itself from equal educational opportunity by attention to the internal processes of education, to the circumstances in which teaching and learning are embedded. The focus is not on the "input" (such as access) or "output" (such as result) but on the educational process in between. The most successful efforts of the era of equal opportunity, the compensatory education programs of Title I of the ESEA, embraced these elements of equity.

In such a parlous state of national mood and conviction, educators appropriately seek a common purpose that can be embraced by a substantial portion of the population—one that is consistent with national conviction, but may extend or elevate it, may even give it more content. The current expression of educational intent, equity, focuses attention on two factors: (1) the school as the principal educational agency in the society; and (2) literacy as the primary purpose of schooling.

In the previous decade interpretations by the public of the work of James Coleman and Christopher Jencks led many to believe that the schools were ineffective. Current critics, such as Richard deLone, have added to that debate.¹¹ The ineffectiveness of the schools that these authors document was their

inability to overpower the influences of family, social class, and economic privilege in determining subsequent economic rewards. Neither were the schools able to obviate the influence of the family and societal characteristics of a student's life on the student's academic performance.

The schools were also ineffective in making children learn, and there the criticism of them has been most devastating. For example, in 1979-1980 one high school in a large eastern city reported that more than 90 percent of its entering freshmen read below grade level, that more than half read below sixth-grade level, and that 15 percent read below third-grade level. These children come mostly from working-class and poor families; about 45 percent of them are white, 46 percent black, and about 9 percent "other," mostly Hispanic. As the principal of the high school put it, "These parents send us the very best children they have." Many of these children are the first ones in their families to attend high school, and neither their earlier schooling nor their social circumstances prepared them for formal academic learning as taught and organized at present.

From an entirely different vantage point, Lawrence Cremin and Hope Jensen Leichter have stressed the many agencies in the society that educate.¹² Cremin has emphasized the configuration of educational agencies, including families, the media, synagogues, churches, museums, and others, while Leichter's work has focused on the role of the family and community as educator.

All of these critics are correct, of course, in pointing to the limited effect that schooling has upon educational achievement at present. Nevertheless, the fact that the schools are not the principal determinants of educational achievement does not change two realities: (1) that schools remain the only agencies in the society whose main activity ought to be education; and (2) schools, unlike other agencies in the society that educate, are amenable to influence through public policy. To ignore those two factors is to fail to understand the centrality of the school in the educational process.

Such diminution of the school role also contributes to a dangerous possibility: Dispirited educators can cite the multiplicity of other factors that affect learning to explain the failure of the students to achieve satisfactorily in the schools. The exhausted teacher or depressed principal can always point to the malignant effect of television, the disintegration of the nuclear family, or the permissive nature of the society to explain why children are doing poorly in high school. Other, more direct explanations might be the lack of expectations on the part of the teachers and administrators for the students to achieve, a curriculum that made few demands on the students, little homework or requirement for assignments to be completed, and other school-related phenomena.

Much as many in this society may deplore the disintegration of the nuclear family or the permissiveness around us, educators cannot address those matters as directly as they can school-related ones. They are correct, of course, in pointing to the influence of larger social factors, but they are wrong in believing that their own efforts are entirely determined by them.

David Riesman wrote wisely many years ago about the necessarily counter-cyclical role of education in the society.¹³ Educators and the American public now need to remember that exhortation. This is not the time for educators to lead in building a new social order, but rather to join others in bringing about a more democratic and more capable society, one consistent with the American

dream, with greater equality, and with fairness. This will happen only when the educational system of the United States, particularly its schools, begins to educate all Americans to the maximum of their potentialities. It will require substantial changes in the assumptions that teachers and administrators make about the attributes their students bring to class and about the levels of accomplishment each student can be expected to reach. School and community people will have to face squarely whether the school's principal role is to reinforce the advantages with which children are born as a result of their genetic and environmental circumstances, or whether it is to maximize the talent pool available to the society by differentiating its program to help those who are not benefiting from it in its present form.

Generally, society and the schools have accepted the former role of reinforcing advantage rather than the latter one of maximizing talent. The demands both for social justice and for increased productivity in the society coincide in the late twentieth century to make us confront the need to revise our policy of reinforcing advantage to one of maximizing talent. Obviously, much of the talent that has been lost through our previous policies has been the talent of the poor and the minorities. We need their talent to be developed fully now, both because it is right and because it is necessary. Both social will and educational expertise are required to achieve such a transformation. Of the two, the will is more difficult and more important than the expertise.

Schools must also learn to resist the requests of other elements of the society to assign tasks to them that would detract from their primary purpose. To be able to say *no* to these requests, the school must first be able to state what its primary purpose is; second, there must be substantial community support for that purpose; and third, the school must be able to demonstrate that it is achieving that purpose with its students. In the absence of any of these three conditions, the ability of the school to say *no* is impaired.

Certainly, not all requests to the schools limit their ability to achieve their primary purpose; for example, hot breakfasts for children who did not have breakfast at home cannot conceivably detract from a child's ability to learn arithmetic, but the time for the breakfast should not be part of the instructional portion of the school day. Not all requests are so benign or beneficial, however. Few schools have been clear enough about their goals, secure enough in community support for them, and able to prove they are achieving them to fend off requests that would dissipate their efforts.

The politics of life in America suggest that if resources, human or capital, are to be deployed both fairly and effectively, the goal of schools committed to literacy for all will need bipartisan support in the community, both of the public and of professional educators. The unsatisfactory achievement levels now found in many schools, but especially in predominantly black or predominantly poor junior and senior high schools, are likely to be, at least in part, a consequence of the lack of public and professional commitment to the educability of youngsters in those schools. Too few "good teachers" want to be assigned to "bad schools." Administrators at "bad schools" seek transfers to schools in "better neighborhoods." We cannot afford to maintain the economic and often racial isolation that allows some schools to be characterized as "bad," thereby exempting teachers and administrators from the requirement that children in those schools must

achieve high levels of literacy, consistent with the child's talent and temperament, as must children in "good schools."

The plea that we direct our concerns to the achievement of literacy for all cannot be read as condoning current racial segregation of schools. There is no persuasive evidence with which I am familiar that documents increased learning for children in homogeneously black or white settings. Even since Horace Mann we have recognized the importance of having support from all segments of the society, including, perhaps especially, the prominent leaders of the community, for the public schools. Prime evidence of such support would be enrollment of these leaders' children in the schools; however, for many years families often sought residential neighborhoods with "good schools."

If we have sections of the public school system in which the leaders of the society, however defined, would not enroll their children, we lose a fundamental means of assuring that those schools provide the education that is expected of them. This is the situation in many American cities at the moment, a situation that has been growing in severity since World War II. The superintendent of schools of one of our largest cities observed recently, "Why, when our schools have become aggregates of minorities, are there suddenly no resources for education?" The public school enrollment in that city currently is about 80 percent black and "other," mostly Hispanic, and 20 percent white.

What is particularly dangerous about the present situation is that growing numbers of schools are being considered inappropriate or inadequate for children whose parents have educational alternatives. As the number of schools consigned to this parental view of the academic dustbin grows, the professional educational personnel assigned to them frequently lose heart and stamina for the educational tasks assigned to them, thereby accelerating the educational deficiencies.

These professional educators have been receiving a garbled message from the society regarding what they were expected to do with the children in these schools. Some would argue that the primary task of these schools, principally junior and senior high schools, is custodial, to keep the kids off the streets and out of the work force. On the whole, the schools are much more successful in achieving the latter objective, keeping them out of the work force, than the former, keeping them off the streets. Estimates of unemployment among the young in inner cities hover around 40 percent. Others would argue that these schools should teach good work habits, should instill punctuality, reliability, accuracy, and other similar attributes. Just how these virtues are to be acquired, substance-free, in schools where student attendance is erratic and teachers' absences are high is unclear.

The most serious complaint, however, is one that affects schooling across the board. That is the failure to make students literate. Although the accusation is made universally, I believe that the charge should be leveled principally at the junior and senior high schools. There the inadequacy in academic performance is most startling. The National Assessment of Educational Progress, which began testing a national sample of students in 1970, has recorded gains in reading achievement for nine-year-olds throughout the testing period. Declines have occurred, however, in writing, some kinds of reading, and in knowledge of science among thirteen-year-olds. Seventeen-year-olds have similarly shown

declines in science and writing, while reading levels remain about the same.¹⁴ SAT scores, which ostensibly measure quite different matters, have also declined during the last decade.¹⁵

The problems of inadequacy are most serious in the secondary schools serving the children of the poor. While, both for the interests of the individuals who compose this group and for the society as a whole, we cannot permit such a circumstance to continue, we must also recognize that historically the children of the poor have had greater difficulty achieving academic eminence than the children of the rich. Only relatively recently in this country have we graduated a majority of eighteen-year-olds from school. In the year of my mother's birth, 1895, about 6 percent of eighteen-year-olds graduated from high school. In the year I was born, 1935, the figure was 41 percent; in 1957 when our daughter was born, 63 percent. The current figure is about 75 percent.¹⁶

Too many schools have retreated in the face of the twin pressures of new high-school populations and societal uncertainty about the purpose of schooling. Many schools have had difficulty adjusting their educational programs to be effective with children whose persistence in the upper academic grades was not, as it previously had been, an indication that they had both learned the academic material and were moderately comfortable in the school environment. Now many children in the high schools have not mastered the elementary school curriculum—that is, they are in the tenth grade, but their reading skills are similar to those expected in the third or fourth grade. A student in the tenth grade with seven years of successive school failure, despite annual “promotion” to the next grade, is not likely to be optimistic about his or her academic prospects for another year in an institution in which frustration and lack of success have been the hallmarks of experience.

Many high-school teachers, prepared as specialists in history, science, mathematics, or English, do not know how to deal with such students. Previously, they rarely saw them, the students having dropped out or been pushed out prior to high school. No teacher I have ever met has wanted to be a bad teacher, but a great many have no idea how to be a good one. As a consequence, many teachers are unintentionally “bad” despite a wish to be “good.” The model of teaching that they learned as undergraduate or graduate students bears little relationship to the situation in which they find themselves today. They are oppressed by an ambiguous set of overwhelming expectations for them. They are provided with few clear signals about what they are supposed to do or how they are to do it.

To recognize the centrality of the schools in the educational process, then, is the first and vital step in achieving equity in education. The next is to gain agreement on what the most important tasks of the schools are. The role of the school in increasing equity in education will be effective only if it is able to articulate its purpose, to gain public agreement for it, and to demonstrate that it can fulfill it. That means that the central purpose of schooling must be identifiable, popular, definable, and fair. Literacy is such a goal. Literacy is primarily a cognitive enterprise. By literacy, I mean the ability to read, communicate, compute, develop independent judgments, and take actions resulting from them. Most young people are now able to read and compute, but many of them are unable to make inferences from what they read or to apply arithmetic proce-

dures to mathematical problems. Without such skills they will find it difficult to communicate either verbally or in writing. Such a limitation will make it extraordinarily hard for them to assimilate new ideas, judge their worth, and act decisively as a result of that new information. A call for literacy is more than a call for "back to basics"; it is a call "forward to complexities." To assure through our schools the skills of literacy to all students to the limits of their talents and temperaments would be to achieve equity in education.

To focus upon literacy is not to exclude consideration of many other important aspects of learning and of social development that ought to occur during childhood and youth. Among these are the development of creative thinking, of social awareness, of ethical concerns, of democratic convictions appropriate to this society. Aims such as those have traditionally attracted some of the most imaginative minds in America. But the acquisition of literacy, particularly for those for whom literacy comes with difficulty, has not been a subject that has intrigued large numbers of our most innovative thinkers. Both social justice and productivity in this country, however, will be further delayed and diminished if large numbers of our young people fail to acquire these vital skills. Not only is the absence of literacy among many of our young a demonstration of the lack of fairness in the society in the distribution of its education, but it is also a human limitation for those who are not fully literate. Literacy is inherently valuable to the individual. It does not limit creative thinking, moral considerations, or social conscience. It ought (although we certainly have examples where it has failed) even to enhance an individual's ability to develop such sensitivities. Nor does becoming literate require a specific pedagogy. The process of achieving literacy is elusive but necessary.

To agree on literacy as the mission for the school is only part of the battle. The second step is determining how to achieve that mission. How can schools make their students, all of them, literate? How can schools adapt their programs so that the student's talent and temperament are the fundamental determinants of his or her academic success? How can the school modify its program to take full advantage of the wealth of resources a bright, hard-working child of a stable, loving professional family brings to school and at the same time capitalize on the strengths of a child whose home life has not provided the same experiences? The school's task is to make both literate to the maximum of each one's talent and temperament. It will, and should be, judged insufficient if it concentrates its resources, both economic and psychic, on the talents of one to the exclusion of the other.

Throughout this century professional educators, chiefly ones securely sequestered in colleges and universities, have preached the doctrine of individual differences and the need to take account of the unique abilities of each child. Rarely have the educators been expected to apply their doctrinal precepts in the grimy circumstances of the school rooms. The doctrine is sound, but like most religious dogma, easier to enunciate, preferably once a week in a place removed from the real world, than to follow daily in the activities for which one is paid.

A pedagogy committed to recognizing individual differences is completely compatible with an overarching purpose of literacy. In fact, such a flexible approach is probably the only way one can make a diverse population with varied

childhood experiences literate. The question remains: How do we do it? That question on one level is a researchable and teachable issue; it involves both pedagogy and school organization.

Such questions should form the basis for educational research at our finest research facilities. Sometimes they have. Too often, however, questions have been posed as isolated matters, not as ones deeply intertwined, like an old wisteria vine, with the structure of the school and the public support (or lack of it) for education.

Only when educational research in the 1970s moved away from large-scale, aggregate analyses did the real effect of programs such as Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act begin to become apparent. For example, in 1974 the National Institute of Education began a study of Title I that was really a series of simple and logical questions, to wit: (1) Does Title I money reach the intended beneficiaries? (2) Is it used to supplement their instruction? (3) If so, do well-planned and well-implemented instructional programs increase student achievement? The answers, which NIE reported in 1978, are Yes, Yes, and Certainly.¹⁷ The conundrum for the policymaker that remains: How do federal, state, or even local officials assure that principals, and, indeed, teachers, mount "well-planned" and "well-implemented" instructional programs?

The Title I results give the beleaguered educator grounds for cautious optimism. The substantial infusion of money for additional reading and arithmetic instruction and the money to support research on reading and arithmetic apparently has had a beneficial and intended result. Furthermore, although these accomplishments have not been widely publicized, the public seems appeased. To do for the high schools, however, what is being accomplished at the elementary level is challenging indeed. Several examples point to the differences between elementary and high school education:

1. The cognitive requirements of reading comprehension, mathematical reasoning, and essay writing are vastly more complicated than their primary school correlates of word recognition, number facts, and penmanship. Research on improving teaching and learning of these elements of the high-school curriculum is thus much more difficult than the elementary work.

2. Children in the primary grades do not have a personal record of school failure or ineptitude. Many in high school do, and therefore their own and the schools' expectations for them are likely to be limited.

3. Parents of children in high school frequently find their relationships with their offspring more strained than do parents of elementary school pupils. A parent of a nine-year-old in fourth grade may feel and be more effective in assuring the child's prompt and regular attendance at school as well as the child's completion of homework assignments than the parent of a sixteen-year-old high-school junior.

4. The departmentalized organization of the high school may prove an obstacle to a focus on schoolwide goals. The simpler organizational structure of the elementary school may make it easier to galvanize the school around such a goal as literacy.

These are difficult, but not insuperable, problems. They point to asking new kinds of questions of educational research, to building new kinds of community support for schools, to schools identifying and meeting their goals more vigorously.

Often the questions that have been considered by researchers have been ones that their disciplinary methodologies have prepared them to handle. These have provided interesting and even useful results. But the questions that the disciplines of the social sciences can address with the canons of reliability, validity, and verifiability, ones that we have come to expect of our finest research, are often not the questions that are of greatest importance to improving the literacy of school children. The factors that contribute to such an increase in literacy are difficult to quantify, to put into a neat conceptual model. Putting them into such a model may even detract from the accessibility of the research study to the practitioners who might be expected to benefit from it. These are some of the problems of designing and doing educational research to improve school practice.

Educational research must address these vital questions more systematically. We may in fact know more about these subjects than we realize because we have been reluctant to pull together our findings about school effectiveness. Our educational future demands that we collect what we already know and learn more about those areas in which our knowledge is inadequate. Most important, we must learn how to make available in usable forms to teachers, administrators, and policymakers the results of our research. In the end, we will be tested by our abilities to improve the literacy of the children in our schools.

Important as these direct contributions from research may be, the ultimate consequence of this attention to improving schooling and increasing literacy may be an indirect or second-order one. The chief result of the research may be that it will define the terms of public debate about education, the results of which will determine the amount and kind of community and professional support for education. In the two previous decades much of that research and debate concentrated upon demographic influences on educational achievement and economic mobility. The public conclusion was that schooling was not very important in either. If we now concentrate our educational research on improving the ability of the schools to make children literate, we may have the side effect of building public support for that activity, regardless of what research says of the means by which such improvement is most likely to occur. In the end, the development of public demand that the schools make all children literate would be the most significant, though indirect, consequence of shifting the educational research agenda to issues of school improvement.

Research on educational practice or commitment of the society to its desirability will not buy equity. Money, too, is necessary. The fundamental lesson of the sixties and seventies, however, is that additional funds will not necessarily provide better education for all students. Money is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for improved education.

Equity in education, then, will come not simply from legislation or funds, the hallmarks of the previous educational eras. Equity requires both the society's commitment to maximizing the educational achievement of the individual and the availability of funds to provide additional educational services. The

society must effectively express that commitment as its central educational purpose. The final, fundamental component is the knowledge of how to educate everyone, particularly those for whom academic achievement has been elusive in the past, and the application of that knowledge to practice. All children must learn; the principal component of this learning is literacy, and the ultimate responsibility for such education rests with the schools.

REFERENCES

¹I am indebted to a number of my colleagues at Harvard University, particularly David Cohen, Frank Keppel, Jerry Murphy, and Helen Popp, for their comments on this subject. I am especially grateful to Maureen Treacy, Beth Buehlmann, and James Harvey at the National Institute of Education for research assistance in the preparation of an earlier version of this paper. I also have benefited from discussions with Diane Ravitch and Lawrence A. Cremin at Teachers College, Columbia University, on this subject.

²Evidence for the increased reading ability of primary grade children is drawn from Roger Farr, Jaap Tuinman, Michael Rowls, "Reading Achievement in the United States: Then and Now," Indiana University study prepared for Educational Testing Service, August 1974, especially p. 137; "What Students Know and Can Do," National Assessment of Educational Progress, March 1977, pp. 33-37; Jeanne Chall, Statement before Sen. Thomas Eagleton, Boston, Mass., April 3, 1979. Of these, the Chall piece is the most informative. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) was itself a direct outgrowth of the equal educational opportunity discussions because Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, Commissioner Francis Keppel, and others sought a means of determining the learning of American youth.

³See J. R. Pole, *The Pursuit of Equality in American History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978) and Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma* (New York: Harper and Row, 1944). The Europeans sometimes see us more clearly than we see ourselves.

⁴*Brown v. Board of Education*, 374 U.S. 483 (1954); *Brown v. Board of Education*, 349 U.S. 294 (1955).

⁵Michael Young, *The Rise of the Meritocracy* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1958).

⁶John Gardner, *Excellence: Can We Be Equal and Excellent Too?* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), p. xi. The book has sold over 100,000 copies.

⁷James S. Coleman, *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966). Also: James S. Coleman, "Equal Schools or Equal Students?" *The Public Interest* 4 (1966): 72. Coleman's study was reanalyzed at length by various groups, including a seminar at Harvard University, which led to the publication of *On Equality of Educational Opportunity*, Frederick Mosteller and Daniel P. Moynihan (eds.) (New York: Random House, 1972).

⁸Department of Health, Education and Welfare, *Lasting Effects after Preschool* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979); Irving Lazar, "Invest Early for Later Dividends," *The Interstate Compact*, Fall 1979, pp. 12, 13, and 28; and *Project Head Start, A Legacy of the War on Poverty*, Edward Zigler and Jeannette Valentine (eds.) (New York: The Free Press, 1979).

⁹Christopher Jencks, et al., *Inequality, A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1972).

¹⁰Kenneth S. Lynn, "Introduction to the Issue on 'The Professions,'" *Daedalus*, Fall 1963, p. 649. I am indebted to Cyril Houle for calling the Lynn quotation to my attention.

¹¹Richard H. deLone, *Small Futures* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1979).

¹²Lawrence A. Cremin, *Public Education* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1976); and "Changes in the Ecology of Education: The School and the Other Educators," paper presented at the symposium on "The Future of Formal Education: The Role of Institutional Schooling in Industrial Society," University of Stockholm, September 11-12, 1978. See also Hope Jensen Leichter, "Families and Communities as Educators: Some Concepts of Relationship," *Teachers College Record* 79 (May 1978): 567-658; and *Families and Communities as Educators* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1979).

¹³David Riesman, *Constraint and Variety in American Education* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1958).

¹⁴The NAEP results are reported regularly in its own publications and are summarized annually in two publications of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, *The Condition of Education* and *Digest of Education Statistics*. The most recent volumes are 1979. The most comprehensive summary of NAEP results is "What Students Know and Can Do."

¹⁵*The Condition of Education*, 1979, p. 187. Willard Wirtz chaired a panel of educators who inquired into the causes of the declining SAT scores. Their report, "On Further Examination," was issued by the College Entrance Examination Board, New York City, in 1977.

¹⁶*The Condition of Education*, 1979, p. 182.

¹⁷Paul Hill and Iris Rotberg of the National Institute of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, directed a massive study of Title I. The preliminary report appeared in 1976 and six of the remaining studies appeared as *The Compensatory Education Study* in 1977. An additional follow-up volume on *Demonstration Districts* appeared in 1978.

ROBERT COLES

Civility and Psychology

THERE WAS A TIME when the major discordance in American political and cultural life was regional; specifically, a matter of North and South—terms that represented not only two regions, but two ways of thinking about life and living it. The question of slavery dominated the argumentative discourse, needless to say, but even before our Constitution was ratified by the states of Colonial America, the great Virginia eccentric (and statesman and singularly shrewd social observer) John Randolph had prophesied the increasing polarization of a future nation: the pull of a strong central government, so convenient to urban manufacturing centers intent on getting resources and doing business, no matter the cost to this person or that community; as against the tug of a rural aristocracy, heavily slave-connected as well as dependent on a white yeomanry, but also devoted to ways of leisure and aspects of a cultural tradition (that of ancient Greece and Rome) at variance with the habits and interests of, say, the burghers of New England, New York, and Pennsylvania. William Taylor's felicitously stated polarity in *Cavalier and Yankee*¹—the South as a repository of one set of apprehensions and aspirations, the North as a place where a rather different social and economic agenda predominated—was deeply embedded in our national life well into this century.

Even now, as the "New South" becomes, in fact, a *déjà vu* North ("commerce, everywhere commerce" we heard a member of Alabama's gentry say, with respect to Birmingham and Atlanta, in 1965), some of the distinctions Mr. Taylor emphasized haven't quite disappeared. The South's literary culture holds onto a distinct regional character—not only in Faulkner, dead less than twenty years, but in such recent or contemporary writers as Eudora Welty, Flannery O'Connor, Walker Percy, Shelby Foote, Reynolds Price, Tennessee Williams, Madison Jones, Alice Walker. These are writers who take no pleasure at all in what they regard as America's (increasingly, too, the South's) industrial ethic and its cultural overtones: a rootless, fast-moving cosmopolitanism. By the same token, Yankee critics have for some time seen the South as one large, amusing American heirloom: all those hard-to-fathom, or precious, or nostalgically satisfying, but strange, oh strange stories—a continuing collective melodrama which may please "us" in New York or Boston, but surely, as the cute Mr. Truman Capote once put it, tells us of "other places, other rooms" than the ones we know and inhabit.

If, as some would insist, there are still two principal opposites in American life, yet again they are grounded in geography; but today they are the East as against the West. There is, without question, a cultural tradition specifically and intimately Western. One thinks of Scott Momaday; the Pueblo oral tradition, now increasingly published—for example, *The Zuni: Self Portrayals*²; the literary and artistic accomplishments of the La Farges; indeed, a string of names, in painting and photography and the essay and the novel: Remington and Catlin, Horgan and Dobie, Ansel Adams and Wallace Stegner and Maynard Dixon, not to mention the strong documentary work of a woman for a while his wife, Dorothea Lange. When I was reading in preparation for my field work in New Mexico and Texas and Alaska, I was constantly surprised (a measure of a considerable provinciality) at the breadth, the richness, of particular, localist aspects of the West's cultural life—the words and the images, artistic or photographic, inspired by, for example, the Rio Grande Valley, its physical presence, its people. And without question, the West's political life these days lends itself to the speculation that there most certainly are a number of felt assumptions that set apart, at least to a degree, many of the people who live west of the Mississippi River: a preoccupation with land and, more subjectively, with a sense of space; a continuing apprehension about the availability of water; a feeling of distance from the federal city of Washington, and a desire to extend rather than shorten that distance. "Space is everything here—and movement, the right to pick up and go and be yourself and no one hassling you"—these are the words of a New Mexico cowboy we knew when living in the state. In contrast, we heard this from a Mississippi lawyer in the early spring of 1963: "Kin is what matters in the South—your people, in your town. If we lose that, we'll become just another bunch of American gypsies, going here and there and anywhere, because someone is singing the tune of cash."

Of course, both speakers, insistently regional, were connecting themselves to themes whose origin precedes the Revolutionary War by a century and more—the fierce, land-conscious independence of just about all our early settlers, and the intense sense of family and community to be found in the earliest American settlements of Massachusetts or New York as well as Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. As with portraits of "national character," those meant to emphasize regional distinctions are best rendered tentatively, with proper qualification, and in a suggestive rather than categorical spirit. When I look at, say, the magazines *Rocky Mountain* or *New Mexico*, I see the West all right—but, God knows, the American West: our consumerism, our television culture, given the dubious relative permanence of pictures and words on paper. As Kevin Starr made quite clear in the title to (never mind the text of) his first-rate *Americans and the California Dream*,³ even the farthest West is a place to which something was brought—culture as baggage of sorts, unselfconsciously worked into the lives of both those who stay put and those who travel a good distance in a strenuous search for a supposedly new or different life. Put differently, if the texture of our national life is changing, the supposedly more remote parts of the geographic entity will most decidedly feel the effect, especially in this age of the airplane, the television set, the telephone—as anyone knows who has landed in an Eskimo village way up the Arctic coast, or along the Kobuk River, and found

pizzas, Coca-Cola, hi-fi sets, snowmobiles, pictures everywhere of the Grateful Dead.

But technology is not the only ingredient of our contemporary life that penetrates even our apparently inaccessible and forbidding territorial extremities. In the middle 1970s as my wife and sons and I visited one Indian reservation after another, one Eskimo community after another, we came upon (inevitably, we now realize) a number of what, I assume, some future archaeologist will call a species of North American artifacts, circa the twentieth century, late (?1970-1990). On a Hopi reservation (yes, *Hopi*, arguably the most persistent cultural critics this country has harbored within its midst) we found the following message, printed on a mimeographed handout: "Something on your mind? Don't be silent. We will meet to discuss a new Hopi life. Come, and feel a lot better afterwards!" In Alaska's Kotzebue, and in Noorvik, not far away, we saw several copies of a book titled *Child and Baby Care*, by one Benjamin Spock. On the wall of a school in Kotzebue, this meeting was announced: "Weekly group to discuss teacher-student attitudes, Wednesday at 3." On a bulletin board in a town named Corrales, close by the Rio Grande River, north and west of Albuquerque, a pamphlet presented questions, and also some advice: "Unable to sleep? Overweight? Having Marriage Problems? Come talk about it! You'll feel better!" Then came the details (the place, the time) of a phenomenon surely not regional in nature: life's personal troubles as a subject for strangers (of course!) to mull over long and hard. One of my sons, wonderful with the camera, and with a keen anthropological eye for the strangeness of things, has made a habit of taking snapshots of such "moments" in our work. He was even allowed, indeed encouraged, to take pictures of a meeting in a small Utah town, where teachers were insisting to each other that they were "interacting" and "letting out" what they kept calling their "hostilities." The result would be "a more honest approach in the classroom." Such phrases belong, alas, to all of us in every region of America; they are not merely handed down, out of memory, as part of one roaming family's "oral literature."

What about another kind of "literature," our national best-sellers; what is their cumulative, transparent message? An endless story, it seems, of self-cultivation—what we can do for ourselves, say for ourselves, eat for ourselves. If we are "O.K.," everyone else is. If we consume X or Y or Z, we have our "health," and that is "everything." But, of course, it isn't; one must keep in mind other parts of the self—the sexual organs, say, or the appearance we give, or the "relationships" we have. And those relationships, Lord spare us—they determine whether we'll really get where we ought naturally want to be: "number one" in our minds, "best friends" to ourselves, knowing "where we're coming from," hence possessed of "mental health." I don't think there is a great need for an extended analysis of, or argument about, the collective impact of such a line of thinking. All the books on psychology, food, exercise, sex; all the sermons on how to win friends, on the importance of releasing tensions, on how to "cope," on how to "rear" children so they won't have "conflicts" or "problems," as if that were either possible or desirable—there is a high mound of evidence, in print, of what we are like culturally. The heart of the matter, I fear, is psychology, though not the kind fairly often taught in college and university

courses (a scholarly discipline conveyed as such), and not the kind taught under the name of this kind of psychoanalysis:

... at the time when psychoanalysis laid great emphasis on the seductive influence of sharing the parents' bed and the traumatic consequences of witnessing parental intercourse, parents were warned against bodily intimacy with their children and against performing the sexual act in the presence of even their youngest infants. When it was proved in the analyses of adults that the withholding of sexual knowledge was responsible for many intellectual inhibitions, full sexual enlightenment at an early age was advocated. When hysterical symptoms, frigidity, impotence, etc., were traced back to prohibitions and the subsequent repressions of sex in childhood, psychoanalytic upbringing put on its program a lenient and permissive attitude toward the manifestations of infantile, pregenital sexuality. When the new instinct theory gave aggression the status of a basic drive, tolerance was extended also to the child's early and violent hostilities, his death wishes against parents and siblings, etc. When anxiety was recognized as playing a central part in symptom formation, every effort was made to lessen the children's fear of parental authority. When guilt was shown to correspond to the tension between the inner agencies, this was followed by the ban on all educational measures likely to produce a severe super-ego. When the new structural view of the personality placed the onus for maintaining an inner equilibrium on the ego, this was translated into the need to foster in the child the development of ego forces strong enough to hold their own against the pressure of the drives. Finally, in our time, when analytic investigations have turned to earliest events in the first year of life and highlighted their importance, these specific insights are being translated into new and in some respects revolutionary techniques of infant care.⁴

The author of those words, Anna Freud, takes note, a bit further on, of the intense hope and great (messianic) faith, if not sadly instructive and desperate gullibility, involved in all this: "In the unceasing search for pathogenic agents and preventive measures, it seemed always the latest analytic discovery which promised a better and more final solution of the problem." But then, the disappointment: "Above all, to rid the child of anxiety proved an impossible task. Parents did their best to reduce the children's fear of them, merely to find that they were increasing guilt feelings, i.e., fears of the child's own conscience. Where in its turn, the severity of the super-ego was reduced, children produced the deepest of all anxieties, i.e., the fear of human beings who feel unprotected against the pressure of their drives." And too, the discovery that yet another fantasied perfectionism had been tried, been found wanting: "It is true that the children who grew up under its influence were in some respects different from earlier generations; but they were not freer from anxiety or from conflicts, and therefore not less exposed to neurotic and other mental illnesses."

But Anna Freud was not only addressing her psychoanalytic colleagues with such penetrating and ironic remarks. She wrote as a social historian; and the tale she was telling has by no means come to an end. It is a story that has to do with widespread notions—in sum, psychology as a dominant theme, if not an obsession, in our national life: among those belonging to the higher realms, whom Miss Freud is gently educating, if not, ever so tactfully, reprimanding for a certain self-important and self-centered variety of fatuity; among those so-called ordinary people who see the best-sellers on the counters of stores located in each of our fifty states—including, I've noticed, the markets of obscure villages of the West or the South, where few know of or pay heed to the "important" (national) newspapers or magazines. Psychology, in this instance, means a concentration,

persistent, if not feverish, upon one's thoughts, feelings, wishes, worries—bordering on, if not embracing, solipsism: the self as the only or main form of (existential) reality. Our two regional informants above, poor backward souls from New Mexico and Mississippi, talked about “kin” or “land” as of transcendent importance (even as God and later the nation-state once were held in such commanding esteem). Today it is “groups” that matter, people who know how to talk and talk and talk.

The hallmark of our time⁵ seems to be lots of psychological chatter, lots of self-consciousness, lots of “interpretations.” As the saying goes, “Let it all hang out,” and then we’ll “talk about it.” Søren Kierkegaard in *The Present Age*, written in 1846, makes George Orwell seem like a mere tyro—the difference between a leap of thirty or so years (from the late 1940’s to 1984) and one of over 125 years: “What is *talkativeness*? It is the result of doing away with the vital distinction between talking and keeping silent.” Imagine that, a notion that it is important, often enough, to keep one’s mouth shut—rather than, for instance, to say something about someone’s “behavior” or “motives” or “problems.” At one point Kierkegaard even insisted that “silence is the essence of inwardness, of the inner life.” Such an observation tells us today exactly what Kierkegaard meant it to tell his Copenhagen neighbors almost a century and a half ago—how far we’ve gone in a given direction.

Here is Kierkegaard again, also in *The Present Age*, letting us know that at least one nineteenth century observer was able to prophesy our time of “cool”—a time in which a crude kind of popularized psychology has become the moral standard many, many people rely upon: “A father no longer curses his son in anger, using all his parental authority, nor does a son defy his father, a conflict which might end in the inwardness of forgiveness; on the contrary, their relationship is irreproachable, for it is really in process of ceasing to exist, since they are no longer related to one another within the relationship; in fact it has become a problem in which the two partners observe each other as in a game, instead of having any relation to each other, and they note down each other’s remarks instead of showing a firm devotion.” And he could take the next step, to see the self becoming our moral *ne plus ultra*. No longer are we as persons subordinate to Yaweh or Christ, to a particular flag and all it stands for, to explicitly avowed and handed-down ethical principles which one tries desperately to live by, if necessary to die for. The self is our guide, our standard—those psychological “needs” we experience, those psychological “passages” through which we journey, those “emotions” we boastfully proclaim to each other. “Now everyone can have an opinion,” Kierkegaard observed, and then added, “but they have to band together numerically in order to have one. Twenty-five signatures make the most frightful stupidity into an opinion, and the considered opinion of a first-class mind is only a paradox.” If the self must at all costs put its banal cards on the table, then subjective universals (exactly who is without “hostility,” “anxiety,” and all the rest?) become a public phenomenon (Kierkegaard’s “opinion”), and “group psychology” becomes a major aspect of social reality (as in so-called encounter groups, T-groups, Essalen groups, EST groups—the lot of them).

“I want my say,” I heard a child insist in one of the first desegregated classrooms I observed, in Clinton, Tennessee, late in 1958. My wife, a school teacher, was there, too; afterwards she wrote this, in her notes: “An impertinent,

demanding boy pushed himself upon the class's attention, and the teacher, full of a lot of psychological talk she'd picked up in a university course called 'Mental Health and the Classroom,' didn't tell the child to sit down and shut up. The two black children were more shocked than anyone else—the nerve to do that, without so much as raising his hand! Little do they know what they're being 'integrated' into!" Maybe she was being, like Soren Kierkegaard, a bit too caustic—or maybe, more far-sighted than I, certainly, was able to be.

In the third volume of *Children of Crisis*, *The South Goes North*, I tried to indicate how it felt for a conscientious, dedicated white woman from North Carolina, a teacher in a proudly "progressive" suburban high school, to go her own way—to be a wonderfully strong and inspiring person and educator both for black children bussed to the school and white children there by neighborhood right. But she was not left to her own resources (Kierkegaard's "first-class mind"). She was ordered to attend weekly group meetings, all of which were recorded forever by an elaborate audiovisual apparatus, so that what was said could be scrupulously gone over—and over and over:

They say we've got to have "empathy," and we have to look inside ourselves and find our "prejudices." They say we should read these books on "the psychology of prejudice." We're all supposed to "talk up." I went for three months, every week, and I'll tell you, it was the oddest thing I've ever seen. Everyone was watching everyone else. You said something, and they told you *why* you said it. One poor woman didn't talk for the first few weeks, and they all jumped on her: *why*? If you spoke, they told you about your "problems." If you kept silent, they still told you about your "problems." All I heard was talk of "motives," and talk of "body language," and talk—about talk! "I hear you," they'd say; or "I hear where you're coming from." I decided I heard them, alright, and where they were coming from—a zoo! I told them no more; I want to *teach*, and I want my children to *learn*, and I don't mind hollering, and I don't mind being the boss of that room, and I don't mind running a tight ship. I don't care what my "needs" are, and why I "behave" like I do. Whose business is it? Why should I be compelled to sit in such a "group," and be part of that "process"? God save you, if you criticize them: you have your "neurotic conflicts," and your "resistance." It's like communism: if you're down on it, you're a "capitalist pig"!

I told them, the last time I went, that I thought they were making more trouble than they were preventing. They get so nasty to each other, and about each other, and everyone else, and then we're supposed to walk out of that room and get along with each other half civilly. But we don't. You don't forget what's been said. They don't, I don't. Isn't there a time to hold your tongue, and try to get on with it—our *work*? What do they come up with, for all their psychological sophistication? They come up with what my mother used to tell me: "Sin is everywhere." Oh, catch them using the word "sin"! They've got *their* word: neurosis is everywhere! Big deal! "If neurosis is everywhere," I told them, finally, "we all cancel each other out, and let's go home!" Why do you say that, they kept asking. Well, I said: Why do you say *that*—the same old question, again and again: "Why do you say that?" There are my "problems," and then there are the "problems" they have which make them ask me what my problems are—it's like being on a merry-go-round. Well, not as pleasant as that! You know, the last thing I said? I pleaded with them: let's behave with each other, let's be civil.⁶

She kept coming back to that last word. She was not self-righteous, she was not "uptight," as it is so often put now. The children adored her and worked hard for her. I have already described her special and widely acknowledged

ability to teach black children with compelling assertiveness and contagious enthusiasm. Yet, for all her personal vigor, her outspokenness and warmth when it came to asking for the children's attention and giving the same qualities of mind and heart back to them, she had a manner that radiated what she wanted to offer from herself to others: civility. A Southerner up North, she might well have been an Easterner gone West, or vice-versa on either count, so far as the issue of civility is concerned, and she knew it. She was, that is, in distinct jeopardy of being called utterly "irrelevant" when she urged all of us, in her words, to act "half civilly" with each other. Those "Living" pages of our newspapers, even the supposedly "best," read by the "brightest," are saturated with psychological and confessional talk. Mother's Day, we were told in 1980 on one such page, is a "guilt trip," another piety to scorn—as if "guilt" need deter one from showing respect, and being glad for an occasion to join the company of others in so doing. Psychological candor as cant.

Even a modest consideration of civility brings us into territory smack in between psychology and politics. When John Milton reminded his fellow citizens of seventeenth century England how important it is "to inbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue, and public civility," he was making an important connection between educational principles and a nation's political life. Civility for him had to do with citizenship, membership in a particular national community—not a T-group or a single "cause" or a neighborhood or even a collection of them, called a region. He understood that a given social order was only as strong as the commitment to it of the men and women who, in their sum, make up that order. For him, politeness was no superficial attribute of human behavior, something to be stripped away in the interest of a supposed verbal bluntness that turns out to be, so often, an exercise in truculence, rudeness, self-display, if not a mix of self-promotion and self-indulgence—"fancy, glorified name-calling," as the teacher quoted above once called it after school, a little whiskey in her. Civility has to do with allegiance—a sense that one's behavior ought to be, under a range of circumstances, responsive to, and respectful of, certain standards: historically, they have been state-connected; more recently, they have tended increasingly to be social or conventional (in the non-pejorative sense of that last word). Now we have moved to the standard of the intensely private—ironically, a public phenomenon. Citizens show earnest, even exclusive respect for the autobiographical disclosures of other citizens, no matter that they might be pronouncements of an agitated or even ailing mind. The entire point is to "communicate." (It is, by the way, quite possible to find civility on the wards of mental hospitals—maybe more of it than in certain other places where an absence of civility, to turn Milton's advice round on its head, has become a virtue.)

When a culture begins to turn its back on civility, ought it be called "civilized"? One is not just playing with cognate words here, Latin roots. "Without politeness, without a tight lid on our big mouths at certain critical moments, it's a quick plunge into the old swamp we once called home"—the words of William Carlos Williams, as he contemplated the ornery, sticky, frustrating, galling side of the urban life he knew so well and worked so hard to improve as a doctor who climbed tenement house stairs every day. Maybe he needed a little of that "help" we're all told to go get. Or is it we who need "help"—because we've got

so much of it, we've forgotten what else we have to do in this world besides keep getting more of it: live honorable lives in a big and complicated country which has so many problems that have little to do with psychology.

Is it making too brash a leap to say that there is a connection between, on the one hand, the insistent emphasis on self, buttressed by reductionist psychology as a secular, philosophical *raison d'être*, along with a consumerism fueled significantly by an "applied psychology" that tells us what's "in it" for ourselves; and on the other hand, the proliferation of single-issue political activity, whereby one gives one's all to what one feels most strongly about, and the devil with any notion of a larger personal, never mind social, responsibility? A long question, but I've heard it reduced all too readily to a terse statement, indeed: "I'm in this struggle because it means a lot to me; it's where I'm at." I'm afraid I can't describe the person as a poorly educated fool, so for that reason full of the usual encounter-group gibberish one learns to wince at or, if one can, ignore. A graduate of an Ivy League college and law school, a dedicated, hardworking environmentalist, he had the above justification for what amounted to a political yardstick. "They're with me or they're against me," he kept saying. All right, he lived in New Mexico, and had good reason to worry about the land, so stunning in its beauty, yet so vulnerable; the water, so necessary, yet so precarious in supply; the air, so clear and bracing, yet so thin and fragile, and already violated cruelly in parts of the Southwest. Still, here was an American citizen, talking about a vote for an occupant of a seat in the U.S. Senate, and nothing else mattered—to him, he frankly admitted. And if he and all the rest of us are told all the time that what matters is what matters to us personally, and that what happens to matter to us must at all costs be spoken, then why not grab on for dear life and with all one's passion to one or another cause, movement, issue? The point is to fulfill *your* potential, do *your* thing, live and act in a way *you* wish and find comfortable—sexually, with friends, with respect to a career. Why not politically, too? True, millions can't find the kind of leeway ("liberation") a collection of newspaper columnists, book writers, and psychological experts, if not hustlers, tells them they require. But the cultural standards are there, the courts of last appeal: advice handed down in response to letters addressed to newspaper columnists; articles on what to do in just about every "psychologically significant" situation; and always that inquiry as to how one *feels* about something, anything.

Civility means all of us subordinating our feelings to certain shared imperatives; and in politics it means choosing candidates on the basis of not only one's personal tastes and inclinations but the entire country's requirements. If the country itself, however, has been very much taken by the notion that the overriding requirement is that each person follow his or her emotional dictates, respond to initiatives that he or she has found *within* (an examination not of political and economic and social reality, but of the mind's and/or the body's rhythms), then we surely are at a decisive point in American history. When the self becomes our transcendence, politics becomes, along with everything else, a matter of impulse, whim, fancy, exuberant indulgence, bored indifference, outright angry rejection. A political analogue to "doing one's own thing" is a one-issue politics. Civility is meant to guard diversity—because the unifying object of transcendence is something, by definition, above and beyond personal taste

or inclination: a loyalty to constitutional principles and obligations, to a process meant to mediate, arbitrate, adjudicate, and yes, promulgate (laws, administrative decisions, acts of policy carried out). It is true that our Constitution explicitly refers to an "inalienable right" we have for "the pursuit of happiness"; but that is connected, immediately, to other issues (life itself, and liberty) and it is part of a long statement, with all sorts of provisions, cautions, reminders, denials, and prohibitions. Moreover, it is a *pursuit* that is mentioned—the task of sifting and sorting, saying yes, but also saying no. And if one person's "happiness" becomes another's pain and sorrow—by God, the Constitution and its Bill of Rights (a clear bill of responsibilities) makes quite clear a particular "civilized" bias, an inclination toward, an insistence upon, actually, civility: the checks and balances, the elaborate political courtesies, hesitations, curbs, second guesses, nay-saying prerogatives of a government, a national authority set up, finally, to make decisions, to govern. At some point, such an activity demands more than the responsive listening of duly elected authorities. It demands a commitment from us—not us as persons, "whole" or otherwise, but us as citizens. A surrender has to be made—not of values and principles, and not of the right to fight for one's (chief) cause or collection of ideas and ideals (ideology, or general political convictions), but of one's right to hoard allegiances—give them only as the property of a particular mind, a certain emotional life.

In losing we gain, in giving up we receive; the old Biblical paradoxes are built into what is called a republic, a civilization. Civility means losing a chance to have one's emotional, wordy say, giving up impulse. For what? For the sake of procedure, order, restraint; for the sake of a thankful absence of the other person's torrent of emotional impulses, visited on oneself and those near at hand. As Anna Freud has pointed out in a quotation above, nothing can be more fearful and disintegrating than being "unprotected against the pressure of [our] drives." The gift for the act of renunciation (civility) is, of course, civilization. Yes, with Freud's "discontents," but that is a small price to pay for sparing ourselves thousands, indeed millions, of breast-beating, fist-clenching, constantly jabbering and self-scrutinizing I's, with their haunting, unsettling refrain of recent years: *I am all right; I have figured myself out; I know what I want*—and that's all that counts. The sad paradox of a collective egoism.

REFERENCES

- ¹William Taylor, *Cavalier and Yankee* (New York: George Braziller, 1961).
- ²The Zuni People, *The Zuni: Self Portrayals*, Alvina Quam (tr.) (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1972).
- ³Kevin Starr, *Americans and the California Dream* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).
- ⁴Anna Freud, *Normality and Pathology in Childhood* (New York: International Universities Press, 1965).
- ⁵There are several theoretical ways to approach this question of twentieth century "psychological man." Philip Rieff has done so through a critique of psychoanalysis as a social phenomenon in *Freud: The Mind of the Moralizer* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979). Richard Sennett has done so historically in *The Fall of Public Man* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977). Christopher Lasch has done so, brilliantly, by using narcissism as an angle of approach to the contemporary American social scene in *The Culture of Narcissism* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978). In my work with children of well-to-do families I have had to comment repeatedly on the self-centeredness one finds, the "narcissistic entitlement"—see, Robert Coles, *Privileged Ones*, vol. 5 of *Children of Crisis* (Boston: Atlantic-Little, Brown, 1978).
- ⁶Robert Coles, *The South Goes North*, vol. 3 of *Children of Crisis* (Boston: Atlantic-Little, Brown, 1972).

LINDA B. MILLER

Morality in Foreign Policy: A Failed Consensus?

"I CANNOT SAY that I am in the slightest degree impressed with your bigness, or your material resources as such. Size is not grandeur, and territory does not make a nation. The great issue, about which hangs a true sublimity and the terror of fate, is what are you going to do with all these things?"¹ Seldom have Thomas Huxley's words seemed more prophetic than in this period of unrelieved confusion in American foreign policy. Although it is tempting to recite the blunders of one or another presidential administrations, tactical mistakes fade in time. What remains is the legacy of flawed conceptions that mislead allies, adversaries, and public opinion and, in so doing, heighten tensions.

The main purpose of this essay is to put into a larger perspective recent efforts to elevate moral considerations in the formulation and execution of U.S. foreign policy. Not only have these attempts failed, in a predictable fashion, but they also have cast doubts on whether any alternative organizing principles could command respect at home or abroad. If the United States is now a "normal" state with interests to protect and restricted means to do so in the nuclear age, are such principles needed? Are their sources to be found in our history and literature?

I

Traditionally, two conceptions have vied for primacy in U.S. foreign policy. The first, borrowed from older European roots, stresses the morality of power, and the second, the power of morality. In the first conception, circumstances dictate a relentless quest for advantage in an anarchical world. Power is both a means and an end. Realism absolves statesmen from individual moral responsibility in pursuit of the national interest. In the second conception, events require responses consonant with moral values. Concerns for justice and equality derived from the American experience are paramount. Idealism suppresses conflict, which, in the international milieu, is an aberration. When stated so starkly, the intellectual poverty of each doctrine is self-evident. Of course they were rarely articulated or employed in such a dichotomous manner. Still, their separate and collective deficiencies have plagued policymakers as they have lurched from one extreme to the other, usually claiming that their behavior reflects the peculiarities of the international system.

The adaptation of realism and idealism to American requirements began with the Republic's founding. The sharp edges were blurred in order to play to our presumed strengths. Thus, America's special mission in the world derives from enviable moral strength as much as from a favorable geographical position. Rich in tales of innocence betrayed by corruption, of perfection threatened by impurity, American culture promotes the myth of American exceptionalism in foreign and domestic politics.

The national interest, if defined at all, has often been couched in terms of high-minded purpose rather than power politics. Our physical isolation from Europe's turmoil in the nineteenth century facilitated this tendency. Twentieth century policymakers have clung to the practice, at least on the declaratory level, despite the fact that, even in the period of continental expansion, America's willingness to use force to achieve Manifest Destiny did not seem "moral" to many critics. When the Mexican War, the Spanish-American War, and the search for economic gains in far-flung parts of the globe stretched the limits of America's self-proclaimed virtue, these activities were cited as examples of a superior gift. The habit of justifying America's uses of force as expressions of idealism was well-entrenched before World War I.

Nevertheless, Woodrow Wilson's conduct during and after the Paris Peace Conference best exemplified the uneasy relationship between morality and power that has haunted U.S. foreign policy in recent decades. While Wilson proclaimed the sanctity of self-determination, he compromised the principle in order to obtain British and French endorsement of the League of Nations. Then he refused to bargain with the Congress and the entire project died. Throughout, Wilson maintained a tone of self-righteousness as he identified his person, his office, and his nation with moral supremacy.

In promising to transform the world, Wilson consigned the balance of power to political purgatory. The subsequent retreat into isolationism denied that the configurations of political and military power in Europe and Asia concerned the United States. The rise of liberal internationalism favored securing American values through democratic principles of peaceful change flowering in world opinion.

If it was American power rather than moral leadership that kept Wilson's principles alive in the 1920s, this fact was insufficiently acknowledged. Domestically, by the mid-1930s, the delusion that power had been eliminated from international relations was shattered in both Europe and Asia. Congress became fascinated with a form of neutrality that it thought would preserve American aloofness from Europe's decadence. Cordell Hull spoke confidently of international rules like the Ten Commandments that should govern foreign policy. Ultimately, Franklin Roosevelt's manipulation of moral precepts and power realities was more skillful than Wilson's because he acknowledged the twin dangers of perfectionism and isolationism. His modified brand of idealism served American interests in World War II and during the founding of the United Nations. Yet, lurking beneath the surface was the unresolved conflict between pragmatism and crusading as guides to policy, a conflict that re-emerged when the wartime alliance with the Soviet Union terminated and when ethnic minorities in American domestic politics began to exert influence on foreign policy.

In the 1950s, John Foster Dulles' vision of a Manichean world was portrayed in evangelical terms. In the encounter between good and evil, dramatized by the American-Soviet contest, neutrality was immoral. Containment was a moral imperative, not merely a strategic response. The ideological component of the Soviet challenge was highlighted and the vigilance demanded of the American public was explained in messianic terms. American-led alliances were essential in the zero-sum game of world politics. The "loss of China" debate and the Korean War exposed a widening gap between totalist language and cautious action. Nonetheless, limited war was difficult to countenance for those who believed that the shaping of internal regimes was the most effective reaction to communist threats.

The intensification of the Cold War challenged Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, who cloaked America's anti-communist posture in the vocabulary of "self-determination," a domestically acceptable term. The excesses of the protracted Vietnam War dramatized the fallacies of a "moral" foreign policy that depended heavily on applications of force, especially those that might not succeed. The fragmentation of the domestic consensus supporting the war began long before the American defeat was assured. Each redefinition of the objectives for which the war was being fought produced additional splits. The war and its aftermath accelerated the trend toward the democratization of foreign policy. International issues that once attracted the attention only of selected elites became focal points for ethnic and other special-interest groups. That their participation would introduce unusual constraints became obvious as the post-Vietnam foreign policy agenda increasingly emphasized Third World demands that mirrored domestic frustrations.

In the 1970s a President and advisors with impeccable Republican anti-communist credentials developed new relationships with the Soviet Union and China as evidence of America's maturity. They revived the idea that "balanced power" better suited the United States in the last quarter of the twentieth century. If their pentagonal world of the United States, the Soviet Union, China, Japan, and Western Europe was to become a refurbished concept of Europe, what roles were to be assigned to other middle-rank states and developing countries whose aspirations transcended nineteenth century arrangements? Significantly, the absent domestic consensus for this essentially alien formula would be invoked by reverting to familiar themes. Henry Kissinger argued: "Our goal should be to build a moral consensus which can make a pluralistic world creative rather than destructive."² The venerable practitioner of *Realpolitik* paid obeisance to similar cherished views after leaving office amid allegations that he neglected moral considerations in favor of power calculations: "No nation could face or even define its choices without a moral compass that set a course through the ambiguities of reality and thus made sacrifices meaningful."³

If hypocrisy marked the record of such policymakers, the lapse was largely forgiven by public opinion. Prominent figures like George Kennan might rail against the U.S. penchant for moralisms and legalisms, but polls showed a deep-seated respect for a "moral dimension" in foreign policy. Though no one could be sure what values were at stake or who was attacking them—"godless communism" or some specific national embodiments of it—public confidence in the

government required morality in foreign policy as ballast. It is surprising that no American statesman of stature has ever explained carefully enough the inevitable discontinuities between a moral stance and the realities of power in a complex international system. Perhaps no explanation was really needed so long as the commitment remained essentially rhetorical. The public would have to cope itself with the problem of finding the proper balance of ethical and power imperatives in foreign policy. The task was made easier in one respect: the usual verbal level of commitment would not reveal the hazards of impotence a sustained effort to apply moral values would entail. Only a serious attempt to conduct day-to-day international relations on the basis of moral directives would expose the inadequacy of the approach or the shallowness of particular convictions.

Given the pendulum swings in American foreign policy, it is not surprising that the 1976 presidential campaign became a referendum on the role of morality in America's relations with other countries. Jimmy Carter pledged to release American instincts the Republicans had denigrated. The moralistic quality of the anti-war and anti-Soviet movements would serve as the basis for a new consensus built on the wreckage of Vietnam and Watergate. Global priorities would replace the stale machinations of power balancing. Domestic lobbies and corporate interests would rally to the cause because the United States would have a "foreign policy as good as the American people."⁴ Once in office, the Washington newcomers, imbued with Wilsonian utopianism, discovered that "when the American people disagree about what is good, the result may be no foreign policy at all."⁵ At the present time, the Carter Administration's foreign policy is often described as "in disarray" or as "a shambles," depending on the generosity of the observer. The question of "incompetence" or "ineptitude" transcends party affiliations in another election year. The moral crusade has collapsed. The mindset of those whose experience of foreign affairs was shaped by Vietnam and the civil rights struggle has proved inadequate to the task of forming a new consensus. Charges of crisis-coping are leveled at those who plead devotion to "world order."

Understandably, the desire to improve America's image after the Vietnam and Watergate debacles was well received initially. Unfortunately, what its authors thought would be a relatively risk-free global strategy in 1977—one eschewing military power in favor of diplomatic persuasion, one promoting global commonalities instead of narrower self-interest—has become the nightmare of Iran and Afghanistan, a development that bewilders U.S. public opinion and allies alike. By neglecting to ask fundamental questions about the limits of moral power as well as economic and military power, U.S. policymakers were in a poor position to ascertain what responsibilities the President and the public should adopt in articulating shared perceptions. As a consequence, the Administration promoted positions that were frequently undercut within the bureaucracy or rejected by allies as inconsistent. In some cases, policies were presented and later modified in ways that made their perpetrators look impulsive.

The inability to "manage contradictions"⁶ stemmed from a lack of skill and a misreading of substance. Anxious to rush toward the future when the global system might resemble domestic politics in legitimacy, the Carter Administration downgraded the present reality of states' interests and dogmas, ambitions

and fears.⁷ Like some of its predecessors who had earlier sought a vague consensus based on American norms, the Administration exhorted. In projecting their own domestic requirements, U.S. policymakers ignored those of others. As a gulf between the articulation and attainment of goals opened, the burden of obfuscation fell on those least able to bear it—the Washington newcomers who failed to bargain effectively or build coalitions. The questionable results of Administration efforts in the four major policy areas to be examined in the following sections—human rights, nuclear non-proliferation, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and superpower relations—illustrate these difficulties and the more substantial problem of moral ambiguity in foreign policy.

II

At first glance, a bold presidential endorsement of human rights as a foreign policy objective seemed fitting in 1977. Linked to the core values of the Republic's Founding Fathers, human rights struck a responsive chord in the American body politic. Indeed, the prospect of a southern president recently converted to civil rights leading the country in an effort to promote the achievement of individual political rights world-wide would be a powerful symbol of America's return to decency. Moreover, a functional focus cutting across the geographical boundaries of friend and foe would lift the public's sights from the vagaries of alliance politics and the vicissitudes of adversary relationships. Human rights was a convenient vehicle for a deeply religious incumbent, uncertain in the uses of presidential power. The subject had both domestic cachet and established constituencies. Tradeoffs, the stuff of bargaining on other foreign policy questions, would yield to the power of example.

In retrospect, it is evident that the advocates of placing human rights at the center of America's foreign policy gave little consideration to the utility of any specific foreign policy instruments—for example, aid or trade—in attaining the objective. Nor did they deem it advisable to determine if enthusiasm for the cause ran as deep in public opinion as it did in the White House. No better cornerstone for a foreign policy edifice constructed on a foundation of moral absolutes could be found. Human rights had the advantage of looking like a positive goal, without the negative connotations associated with the Cold War containment consensus. Events would clarify how far the U.S. government would go to confirm its sincerity. In the meantime, the espousal of human rights would demonstrate American endorsement for peaceful change, especially in the Third World.

It did not take long for others to find the Carter pronouncements bombastic and maladroit. Nonetheless, it required more than two years for the realities to overcome Washington's dogged persistence that, since the cause was just, American preferences must prevail. From the beginning, some compromises were readily accepted. The internal arrangements in China and the Soviet Union were criticized modestly, if at all. Friendly regimes in Africa and the Middle East, like Saudi Arabia, escaped with minor mention of human rights violations. The full treatment was saved for unappetizing regimes like Samozoa's Nicaragua that had outlived their usefulness. The Administration avoided as long as possible the essential difficulty: How could the United States

insist that others respect American versions of human rights without establishing the priority of that objective vis à vis other pressing foreign policy goals? Did officials really intend to sacrifice security interests in South Korea and the Philippines if those governments did not respect our Bill of Rights? Were all revolutionary groups worthy of American support simply because they wanted to overthrow a status quo that had become unfashionable?

The spirit of the Carter Administration's forays glossed over differences between embracing the cause of human rights at home and doing something similar abroad. Domestic interest groups, eager for influence on the global stage, were annoyed by the case-by-case evaluation to which U.S. policymakers retreated hastily when the going got rough. The question of who spoke for the Administration arose when former UN ambassador Andrew Young, an American black, championed the Third World, despite its internal fragmentation and frequent anti-American outbursts, while the State Department toned down inflated promises. On balance, the performance of the executive branch demonstrated a woeful overestimation of words as opposed to deeds. Even foreign policy amateurs should have known that basic regime changes, not all of which could be controlled by the United States, must precede any broad-scale improvement in the status of human rights in many countries. Even novices should have learned more quickly that unilateral condemnation or multilateral outcries are hard to sustain or institutionalize.

No doubt, it is now widely appreciated that support of human rights creates rather than resolves moral dilemmas. The choice of supporting a noncommunist dictatorship or aiding an insurgency that may lead to a communist takeover is ambiguous. Surely in human rights, as in other issues, tradeoffs are essential. Acquiescence to the obvious proved to be costly. The uneasiness aroused especially in Europe spilled over into other questions the United States sought to influence. That countries of non-strategic value were asked to bear the brunt of criticism provoked additional bitterness, for short-term nagging is not a policy. Without a more systematic understanding of the sources of human rights violations, notably in poor countries, global reformist platforms were bound to be self-defeating.

What is left of the muddle that ignored the distinctions between the domestic and the international milieu? What remains is legislation that provides for an annual State Department report on the status of human rights in countries receiving U.S. assistance. This provision, reflecting a congressional flexing of muscles during the Nixon-Kissinger years, was given additional support by the Carter Administration. Together with UN declarations, the Helsinki accords, and the Jackson-Vanik amendment, it forms the basis of American obligations in promoting human rights overseas. The unsuccessful attempt to translate that obligation into firm commitments from others indicates that human rights is a confusing foreign policy goal at best. At worst, its pursuit may hinder the accomplishment of other aims like détente or political stability in the Third World. The United States should not be callously indifferent to genocide or other gross offenses abroad. But the continuing interest, perhaps voiced diplomatically through the United Nations, need not imply an unrealistic unilateral intention to intervene. In any event, the calmer declarations of the Administra-

tion came too late to salvage matters in Argentina, Brazil, and Iran. The campaign, once launched, developed a life of its own.

However misguided, the moral underpinnings of the human rights drive were self-evident. By contrast, the compulsions governing the nuclear non-proliferation policy emerged less clearly. As a superpower capable of unleashing massive destruction with its own nuclear stockpile, the United States has never been in a position to claim the immorality of such weapons when possessed by others. Therefore, since 1945, the insistent American calls for preventing horizontal proliferation have outlined the complications for strategic deterrence and the dangers of escalation or nuclear accident. President Carter's protestations on the dangers of proliferation were similar in content to those of previous administrations. In style, they expressed the same fervor that marked the handling of human rights. In both cases, the United States urged its preferences on a hesitant audience that feared the application of unequal standards. In both cases, the Administration sank into a definitional and operational bog. Just as there are legitimate arguments about which rights are "human," so too there are justifiable disagreements about what constitutes nuclear diffusion. Are explosions of nuclear devices or weapons stockpiling or acquisition of the complete plutonium fuel cycle all examples of proliferation? What mixture of blandishments and punishments could the United States introduce when key countries in Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, and Southern Africa threatened to develop nuclear weapons capabilities via purchase, stealth, or diversion from civilian reactors? Would allies assist in the evolution of a policy?

The first few months of 1977 found the Administration divided on whether it was seeking the permanent shelving of plutonium as a reactor fuel on moral or other grounds. Establishing an interim for working out a global agreement on safer conditions for its use became a more sensible posture, one allies could support, in an age of anxiety about access to oil supplies at a tolerable price. Washington's approval of the light water reactor over the fast breeder smacked of favoritism toward the U.S. domestic nuclear industry against its European competition, although the conclusion purported to rest on persuasive technical data. Statements affirming the dangers of the fast breeder were issued before consultation with allies like Japan which had already committed resources to its development, in part on the assumption that the Ford Administration had given its blessing. Once again, the U.S. moral stance confronted reality when it became clear that little coordination existed between non-proliferation and other interests like human rights, arms control, trade, or alliance management.

In nuclear affairs, as elsewhere, the Administration struck a pose before ascertaining whether the requisite instruments for fostering the objective were available. Thus, general dicta offered no guidance on how to conduct a series of complicated bilateral relationships when non-proliferation was one of a number of crucial items. For countries like South Africa, Taiwan, South Korea, Pakistan, and Brazil, tradeoffs were needed to persuade them to take the U.S. position seriously. Tradeoffs take time and careful nurturing. The collaborative writing of new export guidelines for nuclear suppliers showed what could be negotiated when stabilization replaced self-righteousness in U.S. thinking about proliferation. The 1978 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act, which made adoption

of full-scope safeguards a condition of granting U.S. nuclear fuel supplies, implicitly and explicitly recognized the validity of tradeoffs. The presidential decision to sell India enriched uranium without assurances that it would cease nuclear tests underlined that solidifying political relations in a turbulent region would take precedence over the moral commitment to curb the spread of nuclear technology and materials.

The International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation (INFCE), undertaken in a chastened atmosphere, bought time during which near-nuclear countries could reconsider their options. It also allowed France and Germany a forum in which to delay or cancel their decisions to sell the complete fuel cycle to South Korea, Pakistan, and Brazil without seeming to bow to American pressure. Despite the fact that the final report of INFCE did endorse the fast breeder, the two-year period was useful insofar as it temporarily halted what looked like an unregulated march toward the plutonium economy. It left the question of vertical proliferation untouched, to the disappointment of Third World countries, though it was not intended to encroach on Soviet-American negotiations.

In non-proliferation and in human rights, two of America's world order priorities, the Administration's efforts produced results of an ephemeral quality, including several pieces of contentious legislation. Even these scattered results were reduced versions of the original goals. In neither issue did the search for the comprehensive rather than the comprehensible encourage either a domestic or global consensus. Rather, the heavy-handed exertions made the achievements look more fragmentary because they were judged against over-ambitious declarations of intent. The President or his advisors were not deliberately exploiting the lack of consensus; they were groping in a vacuum, unsure whether America could serve as a model for the world. They were determined to find out by anticipating disputes before they arose. This habit encouraged policymakers to forget the present, the here and now, when a conflict-ridden state system of divergent national interests and bilateral connections often demanded deals. When the Administration tried to correct its course by downgrading its announced moral strictures in order to strike such deals, its actions appeared grudging, not accommodating.

III

Just as the Administration developed articles of faith that alienated friends in functional issues, so too it espoused doctrines in its management of both the Arab-Israeli conflict and Soviet-American relations that the European Community and Japan found difficult to fathom. On these two issues, it was clearly self-destructive to ignore the past or present, especially given the differing constraints of America and its allies. The future in the Middle East could not be willed into existence by denying the pressures of the oil industry or of Jewish groups. The future in Soviet-American relations could not be brought forth by neglecting farmers or others whose economic well-being was increasingly perceived as tied to political détente.

For the Europeans and the Japanese, whose greater reliance on Persian Gulf oil imports and on an uninterrupted exchange of goods with the Soviet Union limited the scope of independent action, the American attempt to inject moral

attitudes was ineffectual and frightening. Their disquiet grew as the United States again sought "comprehensive" solutions, preferably embodying beliefs that enjoyed popular support. On both issues, Washington's reach exceeded its grasp, and its reactions undermined the fragile attainments of its original undertakings. "Agonizing reappraisals" became standard fare as strategic factors took precedence over whatever moral directives may have first animated policy-makers.

American public and private backing for the Jewish state's right to exist within secure borders, especially after the horrors of the Holocaust, used to be axiomatic. The erosion of moral support for Israel since 1973 has stemmed from opinions that the Israeli political leadership is not doing all it could for peace and from the dubious linkage of the conflict to the continued security of oil supplies. Motivated by fears of a second oil embargo, the U.S. government has pushed a settlement as an end in itself, without granting that poor agreements might increase the likelihood of war. Administration policymakers have compounded the public's worries by putting forward misleading interpretations—for example, by suggesting that if the Arab-Israeli conflict is settled, petroleum problems of access and price will disappear. The Administration neglects to mention additional determinants of oil supply and cost, notably the intricacies of intra-Arab politics, the potential internal conflicts within Arab oil-producing states, or the growing development budgets of non-Arab OPEC members.

After postulating the necessity of a "comprehensive peace," in order to sustain the validity of American pressure on Israel as a surrogate for direct Arab-Israeli negotiations, the Carter Administration finally acknowledged at Camp David that such a peace is the least likely outcome of the thirty-year struggle over Israel's legitimacy and boundaries. This eventual recognition of the need for a separate Israeli-Egyptian peace as the *sine qua non* of any other arrangements in the area was a hopeful sign, one vitiated by later appeals for a complete settlement of all issues. Moreover, the American obsession with a solution has proceeded in the mistaken view that placating Arab governments is vital, even with the concomitant loss of Israel's confidence in U.S. commitments. The Administration's half-hearted efforts to attract additional Arab participation in the Camp David process have diminished the importance of that hard-won bilateral treaty. Since the United States is a superpower with security as well as economic interests in the Middle East, its attitudes are consequential even when there are developments that Washington cannot direct, as in Iran and Afghanistan.

The desire to move forward faster on the Palestinian aspect of the Arab-Israeli conflict deepened as the threat of Persian Gulf upheavals loomed. The Administration sent signals to the PLO that if it were to accept Resolutions 242 and 338 while not necessarily renouncing its National Covenant calling for Israel's destruction, the United States would urge Israel to negotiate directly with the PLO, a tactic the Ford Administration had already tried. The Carter Administration, reviving it two years later, was left dangling, because the Saudis were either unable or unwilling to "deliver" the PLO to Washington. These awkward maneuvers extended the cleavage between Israel and the United States because the Administration chose to side-step the question of whether the PLO could be the appropriate representative for *all* Palestinians in the light of its terrorist behavior, internal bickering, and circumscribed *modus operandi* after the Leba-

nese civil war. In such a situation, the United States had no grounds for stating that a West Bank-Gaza state was the PLO's "final solution," and that Palestinian irridenta towards Israel or Jordan was only fanciful.

Throughout the period, the Carter Administration has vastly underestimated both the fragmentation of the Palestinian movement and the danger that an Israel weakened economically, militarily, politically, and psychologically would create in the post-Vietnam era. After the surprise victory of the Likud in Israel's May 1977 elections, a result obtained in part by American clumsiness in handling the Rabin government, the Administration did not understand that the restatement of the Palestinian question in quasi-moral terms could cloud but not really change the central issue of whether the Arab states would accept a non-Muslim, Jewish state in the Middle East. President Carter's statements on the Palestinian question and the PLO complicated a highly charged issue. The hectic pace of negotiations culminating in the Camp David accords becomes explicable when the preoccupation of Carter's counsellors, particularly Zbigniew Brzezinski and James Schlesinger, is recalled: the assurance of energy supplies for Western Europe and Japan as well as the United States through a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In these efforts Carter's ignorance of Middle East parlance repeatedly proved embarrassing. When in March 1977 the President used a New England town meeting to enunciate the need for a "Palestinian homeland," he seemed shocked at the predictably hostile Israeli reaction. His effort to set certain limits on the national rights of the Palestinians, notably the link of "any kind of Palestinian entity" to Jordan, seemed to be an afterthought, although Carter did warn that an independent Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza would be a direct threat to peace and added that it might easily be "captured" by the Libyan leader Qadhafi or the Soviet Union and "become a base for war." But the PLO was quick to tie its cause to Carter's global human rights motif. The President later misstated the "rights" of the Palestinians when he said that UN Security Council resolutions called for compensation of the refugees. He demonstrated an additional naiveté by the issuance of a joint statement with the USSR in October 1977 which mentioned the "legitimate rights of the Palestinians."

The Administration had not thought beyond the Brookings Report formulae: the trade of territories for peace in a staged fashion under the aegis of the United States. It did not understand that both Arabs and Israelis might wonder who would guarantee the guarantor if the United States did succeed in extracting territorial concessions from Israel in exchange for U.S. pledges. Officials were slow to comprehend that one reason for Sadat's gamble was the fear that the American insistence on producing and directing a comprehensive settlement would fail, either because it would appease the most radical Syrian-Palestinian bloc or antagonize "moderate" Israelis. This fear, coupled with chronic economic problems and the lack of a persuasive Egyptian military option until at least the early 1980s, appears to have been the main stimulus for Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in November 1977. Despite evidence to the contrary, the Administration stubbornly insisted that it could stage-manage the local Middle East players. Preoccupied with the link between a comprehensive settlement and

guaranteed energy supplies, the Carter Administration responded awkwardly to the idea of a separate peace. Rather than explore strategic or security ramifications, the United States continued to overplay its hand by pressuring Israel to compete in offering concessions.

When at last policymakers decided to accept the attainable—a separate Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty—it promoted a hastily drafted document which ruled out a Palestinian state while urging the reinvolvement of King Hussein. Despite this sensible adjustment to reality, the Administration has done little since to foster the participation of either local Palestinians or the Hashemite monarch. The “full partnership” of the United States could therefore be damaged by the anti-Western and anti-American phobias that internally insecure Arab and Iranian regimes displace onto Israel as a symbol of colonialism and imperialism. Another obstacle is America’s inability to replace Israel’s capacity for self-defense or to guarantee sufficient combat forces in the event of a massive Arab attack if Israel withdraws from territories taken in 1967. The huge stores of American weaponry in Arab hands, including advanced fighter-bombers in Saudi Arabia, assure that the next war will be more destructive than the previous ones.

Regional stability and uninterrupted energy supplies need not be hostage either to Arab blackmail or to Israeli recalcitrance if the U.S. government insists on a just peace. In the five-year transition period for the West Bank and Gaza, external support will constitute a vital aspect of the Arab-Israeli competition in which America may be pitted against Europe and Japan. The Palestinian question indicates that eventually non-state actors like the PLO must come to terms with still powerful state actors like the United States who favor stability rather than revolutionary change, although American rhetoric may have suggested the opposite.

IV

In no other issue would the application of America’s renewed moral standards be so severely tested and found wanting as in the superpower relationship. The Carter Administration’s experts, particularly the National Security Advisor, argued that the United States faced fundamental choices in its dealings with the Soviet Union. Disenchanted with the Nixon-Kissinger linkage strategy and the overselling of détente, contending factions in the State Department and the White House presented conflicting analyses of Soviet intentions and capabilities. If they hoped to avoid the previous waves of American euphoria and despair as the Soviet Union pursued its own self-defined interests rather than Washington’s expectations of what those interests might be, policymakers miscalculated. For, as they formulated a comprehensive package comprising human rights, trade and credits, technology transfers, and arms control, groups within the Administration disputed publicly the advisability of a confrontational posture toward the Soviet Union. In this light, could the United States relegate relations with Moscow to a secondary position, in order to concentrate on the global agenda of human rights and non-proliferation, and expect the Soviets to negotiate on an elaborate set of proposals spanning military, economic, and

political issues? The Soviet leaders deplored what they regarded as a drastic change in the rules of the game. To be asked to broaden détente while taking a back seat to other actors was unconscionable.

Consistent with its world order priorities, the Carter Administration, after barely two months in office, urged deep cuts in the U.S. and Soviet strategic forces before assessing if genuine clashes of interest or the misperceptions of leaders had prevented its predecessors from transforming the mutual U.S.-Soviet fixation into a more stable relationship. Stunned when the Soviets, claiming that it violated the Vladivostok accord, rejected the American bid out of hand, Washington scrambled for a fall-back position. In so doing, it did not specify whether Moscow's treatment of its own dissidents would be allowed to affect the outcome of SALT II in the U.S. Senate. Indeed, Administration spokesmen seemed oblivious to Soviet interpretations of why détente had cooled as early as 1975. If American officials had taken more seriously Moscow's complaints about the rapid deterioration of relations during the 1976 presidential campaign, they might have been better prepared to understand the Soviet military buildup that accelerated after it.

Few U.S. officials were prepared to credit Moscow with restraint or to admit that

Soviet policy certainly is not one of deception, one designed to "take in" the Americans while preparing for a final confrontation. Soviet perceptions revealed genuine uncertainties about American intentions during the mid-1970s, and the deterioration in Soviet-American relations has taken place against the backdrop of substantial tensions between Peking and Moscow. It has not gone unobserved in the Soviet Union that the most "anti-Soviet" voices in Washington have also called for the United States to "play the China card."⁸

The Administration continued to discount Moscow's anxieties about Washington's rapprochement with China. In speeches taking a tough line with the Soviet Union, Carter thus fueled the ideological conflict both sides had been consciously de-escalating in the Nixon-Kissinger years.

Moral virtue did not specify whether the Administration placed a higher value on changing the internal structure of the Soviet Union than on negotiating SALT II. In the resulting confusion, Soviet leaders were not interested in keeping cooperation with Washington on track. The human rights thrust alarmed Soviet leaders who had settled on a quieter *modus operandi* with Nixon and Kissinger and who regarded the subject as a ploy to interfere with the Soviet Union's domestic affairs as a prelude to reinstating the Cold War. West European leaders, troubled by the impact of America's messianism on their relations with Moscow, cautioned that détente would suffer. Unpredictability had been added to a delicate equation, allies complained.

To Moscow, American conduct displayed several bizarre characteristics—impatience, vacillation, obduracy, vagueness, and urgency. When the United States displayed too much eagerness for SALT II the Soviets responded by increasing their support for "wars of national liberation" in Africa and by deriding linkage simultaneously. If presidential speeches downplayed détente, the Russians proclaimed their greater commitment to reduced tensions. Only when U.S.-Chinese reconciliation seemed to be domestically popular did Moscow

reconsider the possible benefits of linkage as a way of re-establishing the Soviet's central position in U.S. policymaking. The timing of the opening of full diplomatic relations between Washington and Peking caught the Russians off guard and kindled Soviet fears that its interests might be jeopardized by the continued playing of the China card. These fears were too hastily dismissed in Washington as evidence of an anachronistic world view in which balance-of-power politics predominated over the newer politics of world order.

In these circumstances, it was hardly surprising that bilateral trade and emigration from the Soviet Union declined in importance as Soviet-American competition in the Third World regained stature. SALT II languished, due less to weaknesses in the agreement's content than to procedural snags on both sides. Congressional review of the agreement harped on cruise-missile restrictions and the unwisdom of ratifying the treaty while U.S.-Soviet misunderstandings on other topics were mounting. The phony scare over a Soviet brigade in Cuba encouraged certain senators to imbed SALT more firmly in U.S. domestic politics. Further, there were daily reminders that disagreements persisted over how to negotiate with the Soviet Union. For their part, Soviet leaders began to reconsider prospects for additional bargains with Washington, citing discussion of the MX missile and theater nuclear modernization in Europe as distressing signals. Thus, the run up to the invasion of Afghanistan could not have heartened the remaining enthusiasts of détente on either side.

The invasion itself, following events in Iran, Angola, and Ethiopia, confronted the Administration with a choice of painful assessments. Was the move a brutal indication that Moscow believed it had already paid the price ahead of time when SALT II was delayed, or did the intervention proclaim general American weaknesses too opportune to forego? Had Washington's refusal to spell out the dimensions of Soviet military power emboldened the Russians and foreclosed a dialogue, or could the Administration turn the clock back by restoring superpower affairs to first rank?

If the relationship were to be upgraded as a step toward reinvolving Congress more constructively, differences between the White House and the State Department on how to conduct business with Moscow would have to be submerged. Several truths would have to be faced. The instability of the superpower relationship stems from both genuine clashes of interest and misperceptions of political leaders. As superpowers, they contend for political, economic, and social influence all over the globe. The competition is structural and requires a scaling down of objectives on both sides if all-out struggle is to be avoided. In addition, American and Soviet leaders impute too much rationality as well as paranoia to each other. Destabilizing political trends and shifting constraints on the uses of force impede the creation of incentives to scale down because both the Soviet Union and the United States desire to shape the internal regimes of other countries; scaling down will have to result as much from internal constraints on Soviet society as from external applications of U.S. economic and military power. The course of Soviet domestic politics, specifically the succession struggle after Brezhnev's death, could have a restraining influence on Soviet foreign policy potentially more far reaching than Western countermoves. Nevertheless, blocking Soviet goals in the 1980s is rendered difficult by fissures in the Western alliance and in U.S. domestic politics.

In a tug of war between functional and geopolitical interests, the latter are apt to be controlling, so that a divorce between global issues and the superpower rivalry is artificial. Needless to say, the techniques for making the costs of hegemony too burdensome for either the United States or the Soviet Union are not readily apparent. Reducing the benefits of Moscow's expansionist moves by refusing economic credits or sophisticated technology could produce unintended consequences if Western Europe and Japan take up the slack. Similarly, denying the legitimacy of the Soviet regime by performing symbolic acts like boycotting the Olympics is a short-term response. What the recent crises verify is that the poor fit of instruments and objectives reinforces the need to adopt a steadier course of prudent reaction to Soviet manipulations in the Third World. Moral principles, derived from domestic experience, provide little help. A misplaced sense of outrage, such as that which Carter exhibited after Afghanistan, can subvert other objectives like arms control. Saber-rattling is equally thoughtless, as the proponents of the MX missile chose to forget. Unfortunately, the moral binge that damaged relations with the Soviet Union did so at a time when the United States could least afford drift in its diplomacy.

V

What distinguishes America's latest excursion into morality from previous manifestations is the weakened power base on which it has rested. If Wilsonian idealism was obtuse in its preference for the agreeable future rather than the uncomfortable present, at least at that time America's economic and military might could be brought into play decisively when required to reverse a downward slide. When Carter's missionary tendencies had to be tempered, the disjunction between objectives and instruments revealed American economic and military weaknesses. However appealing domestic groups found the new morality as a way of enhancing their own participation, allies, adversaries, and a variety of other governments discovered that rapid shifts and erratic responses were the price of America's flight from narrower perspectives. These states, mired in their present worries about markets and resources, were befuddled by an Administration that assumed these problems had already been resolved. Different historical memories together with different analyses of present and future challenges propelled Western Europe and Japan toward other courses in the Middle East and Asia.

Sporadic foreign policy successes in Panama, Egypt, and Zimbabwe could not compensate for the faulty management of relations with the Soviet Union and U.S. allies. The four issues discussed indicate a disturbing pattern. Calls for action were declaimed in moral absolutes that had to be abandoned when the goals proved to be too ambitious for the means available. A predilection for comprehensive solutions yielded a plethora of formulae and doctrines that overrode the sensitivities of bilateral relations and domestic politics. Global priorities competed with each other and with older regional commitments in a fashion that policymakers refused to admit. In no case does it appear that officials gave thought to whether conditions for their preferred consensus based on moral strictures differed from those required for a consensus based on security interests. Public documents provide few clues about whether each type was

assumed to require the subordination of domestic needs to foreign policy requirements, docile allies, stable political parties with a tradition of bipartisanship, and American military pre-eminence.

Ironically, the loss of credibility the moral thrust encouraged need not have proceeded so quickly. Surveys showed a growing domestic sophistication in foreign affairs after Vietnam. If morality without zeal, balanced by a pragmatic adjustment to reality, summed up the boundaries of a foreign policy consensus the U.S. public would support, the Administration was slow to re-examine its ideological positions. Only when Congress rejected the legislative versions of President Carter's compulsions or carried his precepts to their illogical conclusions did the executive branch climb down from its shaky perch. When the Senate adopted linkage in relations with the Soviet Union, the Nixon White House issued warnings. When Congress pushed the human rights issue to the point of cutting off military aid to certain Latin American regimes, the Carter White House urged distinctions. There is much to be said for the checks and balances of constitutional government in foreign policy.

Beyond the specific bungling that has caused allies and adversaries to question the consistency or constancy of the United States (a heavy enough price to pay in itself), the ambiguities of the moral crusade have stimulated a nostalgia for simpler answers. The old Cold War containment consensus now seems plausible to some intellectuals and segments of public opinion repelled by moralism's latest failures. That consensus, the product of an unnatural marriage of liberal internationalism and anticommunism, would look backward in time. It would suffer from the same disability as moralism: an unwillingness to confront the present.

To be sure, the consensus that developed when the Soviet Union was far weaker than it is now, and when the moral and political duty of the United States to resist any expansion of Soviet power was usually accepted, could probably be revived. But for what purpose? Where are the coherent political parties willing to compromise? Where are supportive and subordinate allies? Where is the common enemy? Where is the desire to defer domestic gains in favor of foreign threats? Where is the enthusiasm for the negative goals that containment implies? Sentimental attachment to the old consensus and the alleged stability of the bipolar world is unrealistic when suspicions of both superpowers run high. The main advantage of the old consensus was that policymakers did not need to think seriously about which combination of internal and external constraints, including U.S. military and economic power, might be required to contain the Soviet Union. In the more complex world of the 1980s, old reflexes would prohibit a serious review of Soviet interests which must be respected and Soviet ambitions which must be curbed.

Placed in a broader context, the experience of the Carter Administration suggests that it may be necessary to do without a consensus, especially one that promises more than it can deliver. This realization accords with the sobriety recent polls demonstrate: "Above all, the missionary zeal that seemed to inspire Americans in the 1960s finds no resonance in popular or leadership opinion today."⁹ Giving up the search for a domestic or global consensus built on moral values could be liberating, as that struggle has come to resemble fixing the horizon. In the nuclear age, the alternative to peaceful coexistence is no existence.

Foreign policy doctrines must be carefully calibrated. Wary of the elaborations of American-style realism in the Nixon era and idealism in the Carter years, the attentive public awaits a more serious statement of purpose.

Do moralism and *Realpolitik* exhaust the range of organizing principles for U.S. foreign policy? Can other doctrines accommodate the past and the future without slighting the present? Can we work toward what ought to be in world politics while coping with what is? Here re-education is essential. Any moral factor in foreign policy should reflect what is best in American culture—attachment to free institutions and democratic processes. Since, in an imperfect world, few opportunities for morally pure actions arise for leaders, it is unproductive for them to pretend that interests and values will coincide when they face bad or unpalatable choices. If the purpose of America's moral strength is to make change worth risking for those whose fundamental freedoms are crushed by totalitarian governments, the purpose of American military and economic power must be to discourage risk-taking by those same governments and their clients. Separated from each other, neither purpose makes sense. Taken together, they offer a sounder basis for American foreign policy than does recent experience.

Translating purposes into policy is work for officials, not theorists. Both might find a saner goal to be the acceptance of minimum rather than maximum norms to strengthen a fragile world, a world with a reduced margin for American error and a reduced tolerance for self-serving messages of apocalypse and redemption.

REFERENCES

- ¹Thomas Huxley, quoted in Norman Graebner, *Ideals and Diplomacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. x.
- ²Henry A. Kissinger, "Central Issues of American Foreign Policy," in Kermit Gordon, (ed.), *Agenda for the Nation* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1968), p. 605.
- ³Henry A. Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston: Little Brown, 1979), p. 55.
- ⁴Michael Mandelbaum and William Schneider, "The New Internationalisms," in Kenneth A. Oye et al. (eds.), *Eagle Entangled* (New York: Longman, 1978), p. 70.
- ⁵*Ibid.*
- ⁶See Thomas Hughes, "Carter and the Management of Contradictions," *Foreign Policy* 31 (Summer 1978), pp. 34-55.
- ⁷See Stanley Hoffmann, *Primacy or World Order* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978), pp. 264-265.
- ⁸Lawrence Caldwell and Alexander Dallin, "U.S. Policy toward the Soviet Union," in Oye, *Eagle Entangled*, p. 205.
- ⁹John E. Rielly, "The American Mood: A Foreign Policy of Self-Interest," *Foreign Policy* 34 (Spring 1979), p. 75.

HANS O. STAUB

The Tyranny of Minorities

DEMOCRACY IS, BY DEFINITION, government of the majority. It is the protection of the minority (and its rights) by the majority, the control of the state (and its administration, its jurisdiction) by the majority—or by the “people,” however one wishes to define that term. But today, as our century approaches its end, such definitions have a ring of mockery. It is not the majority that governs. Minorities of all kinds have become the decision-makers; they dominate, tyrannize, or terrorize the majority, which appears principally as a conglomerate of constantly changing minorities.

In the nations of the old continent, minorities have become increasingly vehement in their protests. We have only to consider the Basques and Catalonians of Spain, population groups whose aspirations for autonomy the Franco regime resisted for too long and who are now exploding; or the Corsicans, Bretons, and others in France, whose special character and aims are repeatedly denied and stifled by the persistent centralism of Paris. In Great Britain, in addition to the Welsh minority, we have the Scots whose strivings for independence are in no sense new but who have become increasingly active since the discovery of oil in the North Sea indicated that extraordinary economic opportunities beckoned. In Switzerland, the inhabitants of the Jura mountains, infected by the catchphrase “ethnic solidarity,” found even federal Switzerland too confining and began to demand their autonomy.¹

In Western Europe, ecology-minded minorities acting under the popular cloak of environmental protection are making themselves heard. In France, the *ecologistes* give increasing concern even to presidents and presidential candidates, not so much because of their declared aims, but because they serve to make an unstable political structure seem even more precarious. In the Federal Republic of Germany, where many minorities have become vocal, the political Establishment finds the *Grünen* (“greens”) difficult to comprehend and faintly sinister. They appear to be a conglomerate of “mini-minorities” held together by a tenuous bond of dubious fighting slogans. Some are openly idealistic, concerned chiefly with the quality of life; their critics generally characterize them as “garden-plot philosophers in middle-class clothes.” But their ranks include also what the German politician and philosopher Carlo Schmid has called “sectarians by temperament,”² men and women who “turn half-truths into absolutes,” who know, for example, how to exploit the doctrine of zero economic growth.

There are also political tacticians in this company, like the East German political critic Rudolf Bahro whose aim is to proceed "from green to red" by making the so-called environmental movement serve as the vehicle that will bring the society to a neosocialist system. Small subversive groups also use the "green" cover to carry on their hitherto fruitless efforts to undermine all governmental authority with the aim of destroying the credibility of democracy in the process.

Minority movements of all kinds spring up to fight for (or against) the emancipation of women (or, of late, the emancipation of men), male or female homosexuals, religious sectarians, important or abstruse political causes, local or regional interests. In the economic sphere there are small and vocal interest groups whose purpose is principally to steer the economy in a direction calculated to give them an advantage. Employers' lobbies, by dint of their capital and financial and personal connections, manage to keep whole sectors of industry and agriculture under their close control. Among employees, especially in Great Britain but in other countries as well, unions or splinter groups tyrannize society because they are too numerous and too scattered to constitute a single negotiating partner.

Among intellectuals, the scene is dominated by minorities of the "committed" (who are often equipped with blinders), whose primary purpose is to fight the "establishment"; these men and women frequently and quickly fall prey to what the French political scientist Alfred Grosser has called the "conformism of anti-conformism."³ Among the young, the usually ultraleftist student minority often sets the tone, and its views are frequently attributed to youth in general. In the British labor movement, a minority of Trotskyites and other ultraleftists push to the top, and by virtue of their visibility are thought, though wrongly and unjustly, to be representative of a movement that the far more moderate and sensible Labour Party properly represents.

The key word is "pushy"; all minorities speak frenziedly and generally are zealous in their behind-the-scenes agitation. Because they are so "committed" and so obviously an active part of society, a great deal of attention is directed toward them; indeed, they are often given an undue amount of consideration. Because these minorities are elusive, because they do not fit into the scheme of the traditional political and economic structures of their societies, and because their members often belong to or are sympathetic to several quite dissimilar groups, their power to influence decisions or to sabotage them is considerable. The "greens" of the Federal Republic of Germany, for instance, come from both the Right and the Left; their desires shape or block decisions by both the government and the opposition in the field of nuclear energy. The Corsicans in France enjoy a comparable influence; the policies both of the government parties and of the Left are positively and negatively affected. And in almost all Western European countries the student-intellectual minority (whose purposes are even more difficult to grasp, it being a mini-minority permeating other minorities) intimidates economic and political powers of every provenance. This, incidentally, happens not only in very large communities and states but also in smaller units, not only in countries like France, the United Kingdom, and West Germany, but to an equal extent in Switzerland, Scandinavia, and the Benelux nations.

Flight into the minority (or the minorities) has become the hallmark of our decade. Even in villages (assuming that the genuine European "village" still

exists in some form alongside the increasingly rapacious cities and suburbs), matters have become too complex. In seeking to cope with the problems that he knows he must resolve, the individual worries that he has lost the "red thread," his overview of things. Commonplace phrases like "*Ich verstehe die Welt nicht mehr*" (I no longer understand the world) or "*Qu'est-ce qui va se passer*" (What is going to happen?) are not simply inconsequential comments for bridging gaps in a conversation; rather, they express a real fear of inadequacy, of not being able to cope with the present or the future or to make the transition between them. They are expressions of genuine concern about being confronted by a host of problems whose interrelatedness is no longer perceived. This only exacerbates the mistrust of a world in which many suspect that decisions are made apart from the people, in remote, inaccessible, uncontrolled, and anonymous places.

Cause and effect intermingle here. Minorities grow stronger and more numerous because individuals feel insecure; the individual feels insecure because minorities cloud the horizon. For an individual, flight into a minority is often a move into the surveyable—into a small community that concerns itself exclusively with a small number of clearly defined vital questions. It may be flight into a religious or political "sect" that concentrates on a single dogma or flight into an interest group that fights for single causes like abortion, family planning, or sexual freedom. Such groups seek to cope with individual symptoms; in that way they protect themselves from the excessive complexity of a world whose connections they do not know or do not want to know. In most cases the committed individual today is locked up in the ivory tower of a specific cause. Those who oppose nuclear power plants are seldom interested in the problems of energy supply in general; those fighting for Basque autonomy, insisting on the rights of that minority, are blind to the more general needs of the Spanish state. The person who speaks for Scotland generally ignores Great Britain; the person who clamors about Corsica is frequently deaf to Paris. Those who attack the multinationals are not much interested in the requirements of a supranational economic order; those who would eliminate night flights because of noise are not likely to wait to hear the arguments of those who champion free international air traffic as an economic necessity. Anyone belonging to one of the innumerable cliques that champion the more popular Third World causes is unlikely to be moved by arguments that do not accept the very particular version of social and political justice that the group espouses.

Thus the age of the minorities has also become the age of intolerance. Though Western society in general and European society in particular have become more liberal, accepting sexual freedom and eliminating many social taboos, abandoning a thousand conventional rules that governed until the day before yesterday, there is a growing disinclination to respect the viewpoint of the "other side" in political, social, and economic discourse; in fact, one sees an increasing unwillingness to even let the other side speak. The oft-quoted statement attributed to Voltaire, "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it," has limited validity today. It is as if Europe has become obsessed by the fear that in a truly open discussion one will lose the sense of the problem and be forced to recognize connections that raise problems he is not capable of resolving.

Fear of the future does not rest primarily on a material concern, at least not in the more developed countries of Western Europe, though many young

people are increasingly worried about their vocational prospects. Those who feel disgust at the meritocracy of their fathers say that they have no desire to climb the "career ladder." Their concern is with the "quality of life," with a daily routine that seems to lead mostly to boredom. It is this disenchantment that makes them ready to leave well-trodden paths, to break away and join minority groups of every kind. Environmentalism, sexual and social "liberation," and the like are simply shorthand expressions for a search for new guidelines.

It is important to try to understand the deeper reasons for the prevailing insecurity of the West, for its inability to recognize and master connections, for its tendency to retreat to the small and the surveyable. We must begin by acknowledging that religions have become as dubious as substitute religions, that political ideals and doctrines have turned out to be evanescent, and that, in political and social life, the achievements of the nineteenth and early twentieth century have a limited interest and utility.

With respect to religion, we have a Catholicism that no longer meets the demands of the modern age, that seems to be incapable of coping with the problems of birth control, the marriage of priests, and the ordination of women. A religion that in all seriousness puzzles over the dogma concerning the Virgin Mary as theologians once worried over the sex of angels is suspect to many. When in addition some suggest that the Pope is frozen in his East European piety, with only a limited understanding of the pressing social needs of the West and of the problems of the Third World, such a Catholicism is bound to be disorienting to those who look for responses of another kind. Some are driven into the arms of "minorities" that incorporate Protestant reform elements, such as the adherents of the Swiss theologian Hans Küng. Or, at the opposite extreme, there is a call for a return to some sort of fundamentalism; the group around Bishop Marcel Lefebvre is absolutely persuaded of the truth of its vision. Both groups, obviously, remain minorities; it would be an error to assume that behind the movement of Hans Küng or of the others who rebel is a mass flight from the official church. Still, the minorities are vocal; they are listened to.

Protestantism is in no better condition. Its churches have become increasingly empty; its services offer no more than conventional stammering largely removed from daily reality; many of its pastors and ministers cannot decide whether they are in fact social workers or preachers and cannot serve as guides any more than their Catholic counterparts do. The consequence is a flight into minority churches, into "sects," into semichurchly youth organizations, into "communes," into other groups that replace the community experience of the earlier churches with new forms of "confession" and with "group therapies" of every kind.

Substitute religions, at least in the Old World, are equally devoid of meaning for contemporary society. What, for example, does the concept "nation" or "fatherland" mean in the West today? The inhabitants of the West European heartland, the Germans, have neither a nation nor a fatherland; Germany is split, stamped a "nation" too late in its history to become one or to remain one. "Fatherland—what will this word give us," asks Carlo Schmid, "if it denotes only the traditional dwelling place of people with the same language, customs,

and traditions? If it is not understood as home soil and home air in which greatness can grow? Nation . . . If this word is understood only as the afterglow of spectacular past events, it will not offer us a great deal."⁴

Still, in certain other European countries the trend toward nationalism seems to be reasserting itself. "The nation, it exists. . . . These are not entities that can simply disappear; to amalgamate them is out of the question." These words of General Charles de Gaulle, started (or followed) a trend that was to characterize both his era and the era that has come after him. Still, one must ask whether such "nationalism" is not largely a reaction to two phenomena that are all too rarely discussed. One is the threat to "nations" and nationalities posed by the waves of foreign workers that flood most of the highly developed countries of Western Europe. A Switzerland of six million inhabitants, a million of whom are of Italian, Spanish, or Greek origin, is a new kind of Switzerland; a Federal Republic in whose industrial cities whole neighborhoods are transformed into separate, closed communities (Berlin has become one of the largest "Turkish" cities in the world!) is bound to arouse patriotic or national emotions. The second possible explanation for the reassertion of nationalism is the deep frustration left by disappointment with supranationalism. As late as the fifties the concept of "Europe" was an ideal capable of arousing great enthusiasm; in that period many Europeans believed that a new life and community was in the making. Since then, however, "Europe" has become a machine tended by soulless technicians who more or less bear out de Gaulle's mordant characterization of them as *les apatrides* (the stateless ones); it is an organism more preoccupied with calculating the quantities of pork to be produced and with setting the standards for holes in cheese than with supplying a stimulus to the political imagination of a people. The election of the European Parliament in 1979 did little to enhance confidence in Europe's future. That institution, like so many others, has accomplished little beyond an extension of the internal national and political conflicts of the member states.

The consequence of these sobering supranational experiments and worn-out national ideals has been a retreat to the smaller community, to the folklore of local or regional pride, with its specific peculiarities, dialects, and traditions. It is scarcely an accident that local idioms (Schwyzerdütsch or Romansh in Switzerland, Breton in Brittany) are today fostered and promoted, that a rustic lifestyle is increasingly asserting itself in certain European cities and suburbs, and that architectural and sociological attempts to construct artificial village communities even in large cities where they do not work well is increasingly common. The human need to move in surveyable circles, to meet others and orient oneself there in such circumstances, remains very conspicuous.

If the nation and the fatherland have had their day as guiding principles, other substitute religions have not fared much better. The only ones who refuse to acknowledge that communism is one of the great practical failures of this century are those who, in their despair over the lack of other ideals and in their disgust at the abuses of a capitalistic society, cling to Marxist ideology. In August 1968 the "communism with a human face" attempted during the Prague Spring was quite literally crushed in plain sight by Soviet tanks; but it was in fact stillborn from the beginning, based as it was on a fundamental contradiction. The great hope of the leftist idealists of the seventies, the so-called

Eurocommunism that was intended to be a synthesis between Marxist doctrine and the practical constraints of Western European capitalism, died at an equally early age. Laid low by the return of the Cold War in Europe, it was finished off by the cowardice of those Communists who lacked the courage to be independent, to think for themselves, who lived in almost mortal fear of Moscow and were paralyzed by the worry that they would be labelled "revisionist" and passed on the "left" by competitors from their own ranks. Eurocommunism could always exist as an ideal but never as an actuality spanning a whole continent. At most, "national communisms" of Western—that is, Italian, French, Spanish, or Portuguese—stamp were possible, more or less independent of Moscow's dictation, but all different in nature and sufficiently splintered that they were not available to offer any general uplifting substitute religion.

Is it possible, then, to identify any political ideals and ideologies that might provide some modest comfort to disoriented West Europeans? Socialism in its "Social Democratic" form has long since succumbed to pragmatism, compromising with an enlightened liberalism to such an extent that it cannot possibly serve as an inspiring new ideology. As for liberalism, it exists in its pure form only in musty textbooks. In everyday life, both necessary and proper concessions to a planned economy have turned liberalism, like socialism, into a hybrid not likely to entice very many. Though "liberal" parties hold political power in many Western European states, they are best seen as communities of interest rather than bearers of ideas; they are conglomerates in which minorities of every kind are joined together. To make matters worse, not even in these "communities of interest" do Western Europeans find themselves adequately represented. The very structure of a national party seems far too intricate today, particularly in those countries that conduct their parliamentary elections under a proportional representation system or in a mixed form. The voter is not likely to know the candidates, and confronted with a meaningless list, he is at sea. The desperate attempts of leading politicians to gain greater "visibility" through the electronic mass media do not change this situation very much. The electorate and their representatives are remote from one another, and mutual confidence in such a situation is uncommon.

This offers another incentive for flight into a minority—specifically, into small groups that focus on particular interests. For example, the "citizens' initiatives" (*Bürgerinitiativen*) of the Federal Republic of Germany are small extra-parliamentary formations—more or less spontaneously formed—which resort to self-help, seeking to take the fate of their immediate environment into their own hands, but hoping in the process to influence and possibly control the policies of the country as a whole. In Northern Europe particularly, opponents of nuclear power stations have formed local or regional groups that aspire to reorient the energy policies of their societies. Such minorities have imposed their will on the nation outside the "majority," the parliamentary majority elected by the people, solely by dint of their stubborn, persistent concentration on a single cause. They do so in vital matters of social organization, sexual freedom, birth control, equal rights for women, and much else. Whether this is good or bad is not at issue here; what is relevant to our argument is the new and growing influence of such organized minorities.

In Southern Europe, particularly in Spain and France, powerful regional minorities attempt to achieve their objectives largely through intimidation,

blackmail, and terrorism. In Spain, the bloody Basque terror is pushing Madrid into authoritarian reactions that threaten to produce grave relapses in a state that is only beginning to recover from its recent Fascist past. The violent mini-rebellion of the Corsicans both on their home island and in metropolitan France poses certain dangers to the stability of that society. One has only to think also of the terrorism conducted by the Baader-Meinhof gang and its successors in Germany and of what has happened in Italy in recent years to appreciate how damaging all this has been to traditional confidence in democratic procedures and prospects.

The lack of inspiring political ideologies universally accepted by the masses is paralleled by a palpable decline in political leadership. In contemporary Western Europe, General de Gaulle was almost certainly the last leader possessed of genuine charisma; statesmen since his day are of a different breed. The *animal politique* does not seem to exist in its original form; those who attract a large number of adherents for a time are generally representatives of material interests or pragmatists, individuals who master politics on a day-to-day basis and are accepted for that reason only. "Governing may become an uncharismatic, low-morale profession," write Herman Kahn, William Brown, and Leon Martel in their study *The Next 200 Years*.⁵ This judgment may give a partial answer to why people appear to have lost confidence in political leaders and why they are so ready to retreat to surveyable parish-pump politics that they can better understand.

Many existing political institutions and structures leave the individual feeling confused and helpless, because—so it seems to the ordinary person—no one of them has turned out to be wholly practicable or worthy of continuing confidence. Centralism or federalism, parliamentary, presidential, or direct democracy—Europe has experienced all of them and has emerged substantially discouraged by the experience. None of these systems frees the individual from the fear of being dominated by anonymous, unsurveyable forces. Total centralism—which France embraced and failed with—was powerless to arrest the decline of that country's sense of *grandeur* or to diminish the unrest that stirred within its ethnic minorities. As for total federalism, Switzerland, its classic standard-bearer, may presently be failing one of its more severe tests. It is becoming increasingly apparent that the autonomy of the small communities and cantons—in theory the ideal of every freedom-loving person—is breaking down in the face of modern economic realities that call for national or even supranational regulation. Federalism is failing in a society that is increasingly mobile, many of whose members no longer feel rooted in their village, canton, or district.

Parliamentary democracy demonstrated its instability in the third and fourth republics of France, and seems at present to be showing similar weaknesses in Great Britain and elsewhere for many of the same reasons. The system of parliamentary representation is credible for only a small part of the electorate; major decisions appear to be made outside Parliament—in committees and commissions—and behind the scenes, in labor unions and in other bodies that are said to have become powerful, and also in pressure groups and in local and regional governmental agencies. Factions in parliamentary assemblies are known to be manipulated by interest groups and lobbyists of all kinds, minorities that join together in ever-changing, intricate coalitions. This is where the

obscure, anonymous forces are thought to be at work, giving validity to the argument that ordinary individuals are in effect disenfranchised. Such sentiment leads many to withdraw into surveyable communities where they can turn to concrete and specific problems and see the fruits of their political labors.

Presidential democracy, as practiced in France since de Gaulle, is equally suspect; there the real centers of power are thought to be even more opaque for the ordinary citizen than elsewhere. Alongside a powerless parliament there are two governments: the *gouvernement* officially designated as such, and the shadow government formed by the president's cabinet that reserves to itself certain *domaines réservés* as its sole preserve; what these are depends on the situation of the moment and the predilections of the incumbent president.

Finally, direct democracy, also called referendum democracy, is increasingly showing its limitations. Overtaxed by countless complex modern problems on which he is asked to register his *yes* or *no* several times a year, the voter either turns his back on politics altogether or, being ignorant of the issues, makes emotional decisions that border on the absurd. The Swiss, for example, voted to make Switzerland the only European country not to institute daylight saving time in 1980. Switzerland has thus become an "island" with an hour's time difference from an entire continent, the result of agitation by an agricultural minority that believes it cannot accustom its cows to new milking schedules.

The contradiction seems complete: in a direct democracy, with its devices of popular initiative and referendum, an individual ought to feel secure, knowing that he is being treated as a mature citizen; the will of the majority ought to be respected, and the tyranny of the minorities ought to be least perceptible. Experience has shown, however, that even (and in fact especially) here, active, influential, and demagogic minorities are able to play a dominant role and exert a decisive influence on the sound instincts of the people. This occurs, in part, because the average voter is more receptive to "simple" arguments than to complicated and differentiated explanations. Then, also, the average citizen generally feels a certain guilt about the disadvantaged, and this makes him susceptible to the arguments of minorities. Also, direct, or referendum, democracy, with its many elections, gives the active minority frequent opportunities to mobilize its adherents; the indifferent, resigned, or tired "majority" generally stays at home on election day.

The feeling of powerlessness that often drives the citizen in modern society into the arms of minorities will not be eliminated or alleviated by the popularization of politics through the electronic mass media. This popularization provides an illusory rather than a genuine gain. Television and, to a lesser extent, radio distort reality: it is the "interesting" outsider and the excited minority that are effective on the screen and whose views are consequently given inordinate weight. Problems that preoccupy only a few thus capture the spotlight while problems that people wrestle with everywhere—painful, disagreeable, tedious problems—tend to be disregarded. "Emancipated" people—those who shock and wish to shock—dominate the show business aspect of television despite their insignificant numbers; the real crises of society are generally difficult to articulate and are rarely seen on prime time. Ultraleftist or ultrarightist splinter groups, which make a great noise with their words and bullets, dominate the

picture-hungry electronic information media while the monotonous political everyday life of the majority is largely ignored. It is especially with the modern mass media that the extraordinary and the minority triumph.

The contemporary intellectual bears a great part of the blame for this development. As Herman Kahn and his colleagues correctly observe,⁶ the intellectual today belongs to the mass movement and presents himself as a representative of the "knowledge industry." As standards decline, and as secondhand knowledge and superficial education replace personal experience, he increasingly proves himself by becoming an intellectual snob who prizes oddities and spurns the ordinary almost as a matter of principle. He glorifies every trivial sneeze of the minority while refusing to take cognizance of the chronic catarrh of the majority. While certainly one of the noblest tasks of the intelligentsia is to encourage the avant-garde—in fact, to *be* avant-garde, and thus a minority—if, as happens all too frequently in present-day Europe, such an ambition develops into "art for art's sake," originality for the sake of originality, and if oddities are extolled only because they are "way-out," then we are in grave danger. If theater, literary, or film critics praise unconventional works only because they are different, if intellectuals admire them principally because they are anxious to prove themselves and are afraid of being ridiculed as Philistines by a few hundred of their colleagues—if intellectuals, then, disregard the true problems of life—their intellectual domination becomes the unbearable, unjustified tyranny of an unauthorized minority and is no longer what it ought to be: the standard of a select and informed body of critical individuals. A considerable part of European cultural life seems to be dominated today by such preoccupations. The trend that the intelligentsia declares to be decisive is seldom meaningful for today's average citizen. It appears, at times, to be the sum total of the self-satisfied judgments of very small minorities, habituated to living in countless hothouses of intellectual arrogance.

Here, too, there are no general guidelines or universally valid standards. We are witnessing once again the helplessness of those who can no longer find or grasp connections, the retreat to the concrete and the surveyable, and the refusal to recognize, in addition to one's own viewpoint, the opinions of others as worthy of discussion. These phenomena are as clearly recognizable (and indeed perhaps more glaring) in the milieu of the intellectual as they are in the environment of the average citizen. If the few remaining creative figures of European culture can scarcely muster more than point-by-point essays; if the modern French cultural scene gapes with emptiness; if a good portion of the young intelligentsia, an entire generation, laps up the banal commonplaces of a Mao Tse-tung as profound insights—then this is not so much a matter of decadence as a loss of general orientation, a retreat to individual and minority dogmas.

The smaller the minorities, the more narrowly defined their aims, the more power-hungry they become. Tyranny of the minorities? The general danger here is that political and social life will disintegrate into anarchy (and at a time that actually boasts the possession of perfect national, supranational, party-political, or nonpartisan steering mechanisms); that small groups will terrorize a helpless majority; that emotional opinions will overwhelm reason; that intolerance will dominate and liberal forbearance disappear; that social, cultural, and

political life will slip out of the orderly control of individuals and of the community; and that democracy will turn undemocratic precisely because it will be uncontrollable and uncontrolled.

Tyranny of the minority? May this not also have a positive side, even an important one? In the absence of accepted guidelines and ideologies, where neither parties nor large groups nor individuals nor collectives of any kind distinguish themselves by their leadership, may not the responsibility and initiative of the individual soon carry greater weight again? Minorities have already produced salutary reactions. Movements of individuals are beginning to resist not only the patronizing treatment of the citizen by the state and the economy, but also the tyranny exerted by small groups, the "prohibitions" that minorities seek to impose for the protection of their special interests. It is characteristic of minorities that they offer relatively little creative guidance but agitate to decorate the landscape of our lives principally with garden fences and protective ramparts.

Retreating to individual problems and special interests is one thing; remembering the responsibility of the individual is quite another. Taking one's fate in one's own hands may indeed express the selfish tyranny of the minority, but it may also mean the reawakening of individual potency, of the creative and imaginative powers that we associate with man. Because of the narrowness and apparent "unreasonableness" of its aims, a citizens' initiative effort to preserve a few old trees in the concrete desert of a West German town, in opposition to the "reasonableness" of city planners and financial managers, may well give rise to certain apprehensions but also has many encouraging features. The seemingly desperate efforts of a handful of inhabitants in the Bronx to save their dwellings and neighborhood from utter destruction by the elements, by arson and malevolence, and by the foot-dragging of the government also raise certain hopes. There is always a danger that groups insisting on the safeguard of freedom, on the quality of life, and on the responsibility of the individual will themselves turn into tyrannical, egotistic minorities. But there is an equal chance that something else may also be attained.

Translated by Harry Zohn

REFERENCES

¹Amidst a great deal of commotion that at times assumed the form of a miniature civil war, the bilingual Swiss canton Berne recently split in two. Part of the Francophone population of the largely German-speaking canton desired to preserve its autonomy in a canton of its own, and this came into being a few months ago under the name Jura. The unrest still persists, however, and the problem has not been definitively solved.

²Carlo Schmid, letter to Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, published in *Die Zeit*, December 21, 1979, p. 10.

³Alfred Grosser, *Deutschlandbilanz, Geschichte Deutschlands seit 1945* (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1971), p. 379.

⁴Schmid, letter to Chancellor Helmut Schmidt.

⁵Herman Kahn, William Brown, Leon Martel, *The Next 200 Years* (New York: William Morrow, 1976), pp. 196-7.

⁶Kahn, Brown, and Martel, *The Next 200 Years*, p. 184.

Notes on Contributors

J. MYRON ATKIN, born in New York City in 1927, is dean of the school of education at Stanford University. He is the author of numerous books and articles on teaching methods and educational philosophy, and has served as consultant or advisor on many private and governmental education boards. His current interest is the effects of government policies on schools, particularly on curriculum, in the United States and the United Kingdom.

ALLEN H. BARTON, born in 1924 in Greenwich, Connecticut, is professor of sociology at Columbia University. He is the author of *Communities in Disaster* (1969) and co-author of *Opinion-Making Elites in Yugoslavia* (1973) and *Decentralizing City Government* (1977), and co-editor of *Making Bureaucracies Work* (1980). He was long-time director of the Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia.

BARRY BOSWORTH, born in 1942 in Michigan, is a senior fellow at The Brookings Institution. He is co-author of *Capital Needs in the Seventies* (1975) and the former director of the Council on Wage and Price Stability, 1977-1979.

MORRIS P. FIORINA, born in 1946 in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, is professor of political science in the division of humanities and social sciences at California Institute of Technology. His books include *Representatives, Roll Calls, and Constituencies* (1974), *Congress—Keystone of the Washington Establishment* (1977), *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections* (forthcoming), and numerous articles on American politics and political theory. He was co-winner of the 1977 Washington Monthly Political Book Award.

PATRICIA ALBJERG GRAHAM, born in 1935 in Lafayette, Indiana, is Charles Warren Professor of the History of American Education at Harvard University. She is the author of *Progressive Education: From Arcady to Academe* (1967) and *Community and Class in American Education: 1865-1918* (1974) and co-editor of *Women in Higher Education* (1974). She was director of the National Institute of Education for the years 1977 through 1979.

HANS H. LANDSBERG was born in 1913 in Germany. He is the director of the Center for Energy Policy Research and a senior fellow at Resources for the Future. He is the author of *Natural Resources for U.S. Growth* (1964), co-author of *Resources in America's Future, Patterns of Requirements and Availabilities, 1960-2000* (1963) and *Energy in the United States* (1968), and chaired the study group that produced *Energy: The Next Twenty Years* (1979). He received the Mineral Economics Award from the American Institute of Mining Engineers for 1980.

LINDA B. MILLER, born in Manchester, New Hampshire, in 1937, is professor of political science at Wellesley College and adjunct research fellow at the Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University. She is the author of *World Order and Local Disorder: The United Nations and Internal Conflicts* (1967) and numerous monographs, articles, and reviews on world politics, American foreign policy, international organization, and European politics.

HANS O. STAUB was born in 1922 in Davos, Switzerland. He is editor-in-chief of *Die Weltwoche*, a Swiss weekly published in Zürich. His books include *Paris für Anfänger* (1962), *Frankreich zwischen gestern und morgen* (1963), *DeGaulle, Träumer oder Realist* (1966), *Südafrika-Report* (1975), and numerous studies on mass media.

DAVID VOGEL, born in 1947 in New York City, is associate professor in the school of business administration at the University of California at Berkeley. He is the author of *Lobbying the Corporation: Citizen Challenges to Business Authority* (1978), co-author of *Ethics and Profits: The Crisis of Confidence in American Business* (1976) and *Ethics in the Education of Business Managers* (1980), and co-editor of *Corporations and Their Critics* (forthcoming).

ROBERT WOOD, born in 1923 in St. Louis, is superintendent of the Boston public schools. He is the author of *Suburbia: Its People and Their Politics* (1959), *1400 Governments* (1961), and *The Necessary Majority: Middle America and the Urban Crisis* (1972). He taught political science at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, served as undersecretary and secretary in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and from 1970 to 1978 was president of the University of Massachusetts.